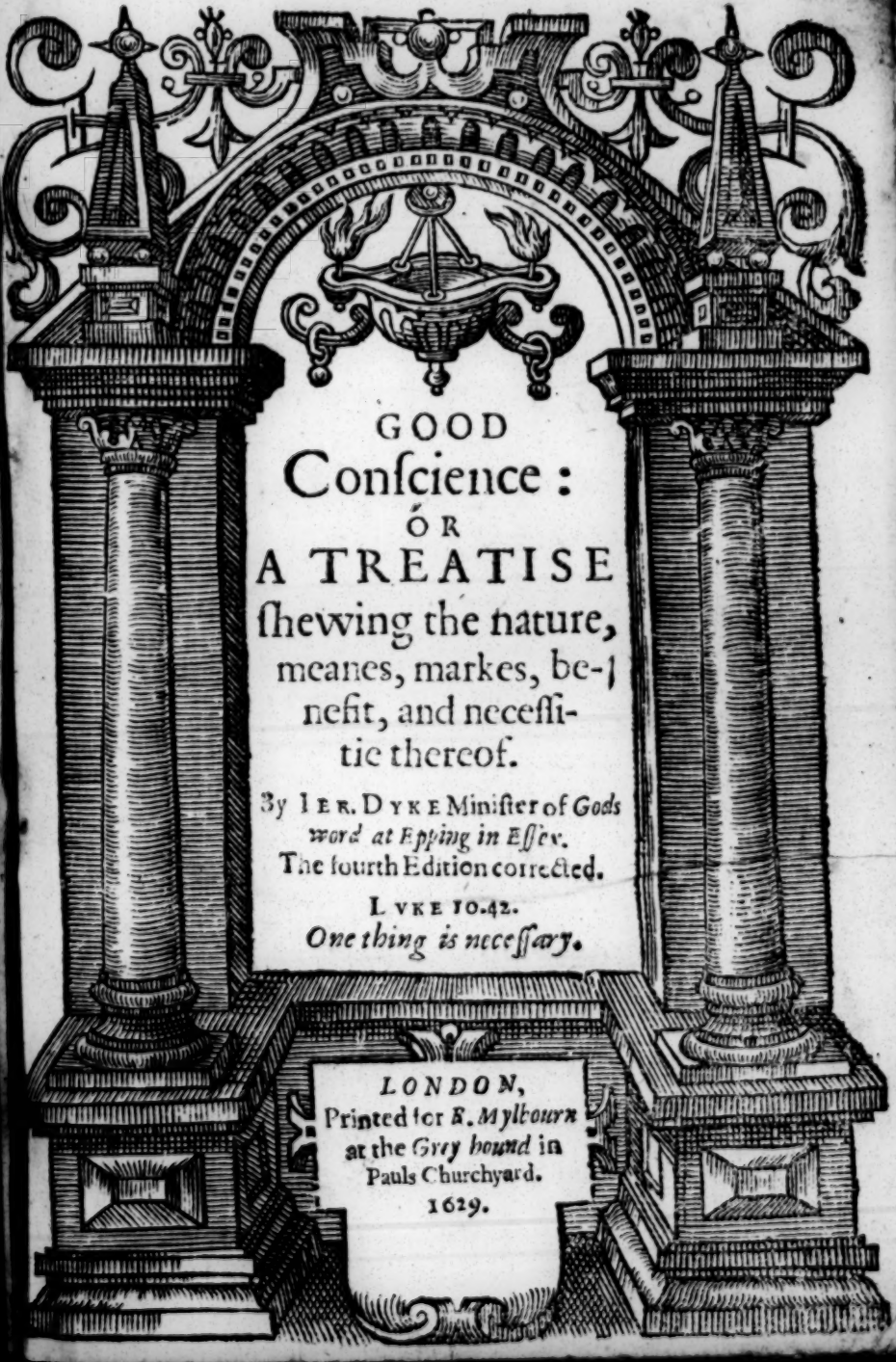
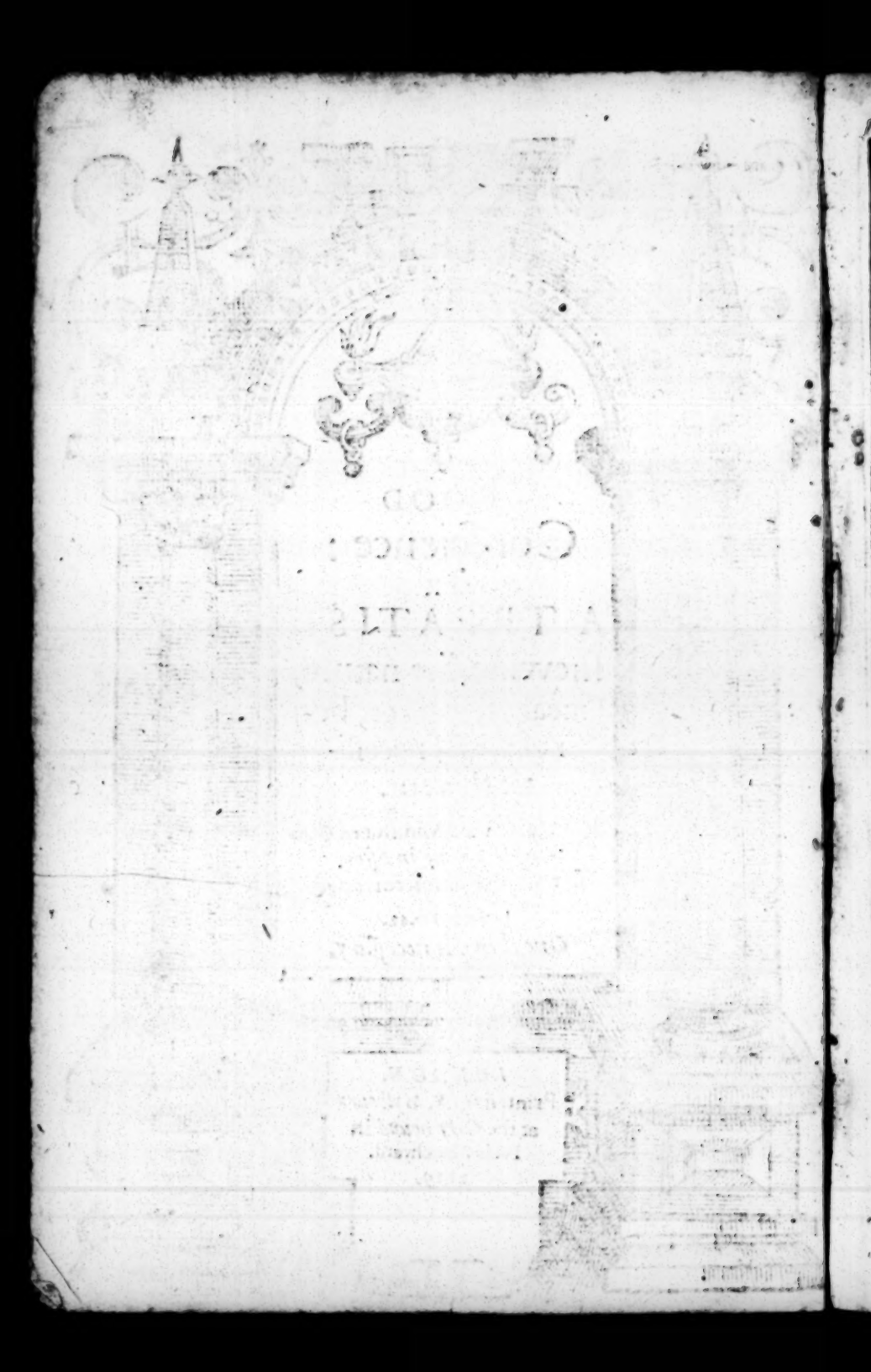


GOOD Conſcience: OR A TREATISE ſhewing the nature, meanes, markes, benefit, and neceſſitie thereof.

By IER. DYKE Miniſter of *Gods word at Epping in Eſſex.*
The fourth Edition corrected.

LVKE 10.42.
One thing is neceſſary.

LONDON,
Printed for *R. Mylbourn* at the *Grey hound* in Pauls Churchyard.
1629.



TO THE RIGHT VVORSHIPFVL

Sr. FRANCIS BARRINGTON Knight and Baronet, a Patron and patterne of Pietie *and good Conſcience.*

RIGHT WORSHIPFVL,

THat which the Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeakes of a mans deſire of the office of a Biſhop, may be truely ſpoken of euery one who deſires to gaine men to the loue of a

good Conſcience, that *he deſires a worthy Worke*: Yea it is the worke which is, and ought to bee made the ſcope and drift of the worthy worke of the Miniſtry. And therefore it is, that he, that deſires the calling of the Miniſtery, deſires a worthy worke, becauſe of this worthy worke of bringing men to good Conſcience. A worke at which all workes and bookes, ſhould ſpecially ayme: Conſcience is a book, one of thoſe books that ſhal be opened at the laſt day, and to which men ſhall bee put, and by which they ſhall be iudged. Therefore to the directing, informing, and amending of this booke, ſhould all other bookes ſpecially tend. Yea *Salomon* ſeems to call men off from all other bookes,

Vnicuique liber eſt propria conſcientia, & ad hanc librum dirigendū & emēdandum omnes alii inuenti ſunt. Bern. de Conſ.

bookes, and ſtudies, to the ſtudy of this ſo neceſſary a point, the keeping of a good Conſcience: *Of making many bookes,* (ſaith hee) *there is no end, & much ſtudy is a wearineſs of the fleſh, Let vs heare the cõcluſion of the whole matter, Feare God and keepe his Cõmandements, for this is the whole duty of man.* As if his aduice tended to this, to neglect all ſtudies in cõpariſon of that ſtudy which aimes at the getting and keeping of a good Conſcience. It would be exceeding happie with vs if this ſtudie were more in requeſt amongſt vs. Wee ſeeme to liue in thoſe dayes fore-told by the Prophet, wherein *the earth ſhould bee filled with the knowledge of the Lord.* We are bleſſed that liue in ſo cleare a Sun-ſhine of Gods

Eccl. 12. 12 13.

Iſa. 11. 9.

truth, but yet the griefe, is that through our owne default, our Sun-ſhine is but like the winter light, all light little or no heate, and we make no other uſe of our light, but onely to ſee by, not to walke and worke by. In the firſt re-entrance of the Goſpell amongſt vs, how deuout, holy, zealous, and men renowned for Conſcience were our Martyrs, and our firſt Planters, Preachers, and profeſſors of Religion. They had not generally the knowledge and learning, the world now hath, nor the world now the Conſcience they then had. There be now better Scholars, there were then better Men: they were as excellent for Deuotion, as our Times are for Diſputation.

Antiqua ſapientia nihil aliud quã faciendã et vitandã præcepit, et tunc longe melioris erant viri. Poſtquam docti prodierunt, boni deſunt. Simplex enim illa et aperta virtus in obſcuram et ſolertẽ ſcientiam verſa eſt, docemurque diſputare, non viuere. Senec. epiſt. 96.

tation. It is an excellent ſight to ſee ſuch Chriſtians as were the Romanes. *Full of goodneſſe, filled with all Knowledge.* It is pitty that euer ſo louely a paire ſhould bee ſundred. Yet if they be parted, it is beſt being without that which with moſt ſafety may bee ſpared. A good Conſcience is ſure to doe well, though it want the accompliſhment of Learning, and greater meaſures of Knowledge and Vnderſtanding. But take Learning from a good Conſcience, and it is but a Ring of gold in a Swines ſnout, or that which is worſe, *A thorne in a Drunkards hand.* Learning is to bee highly apprized; Riches, Honours, and all other earthly bleſſings are vile to it. But yet though it take place

Rom. 15. 14.

Prou. 26. 9.

place of all other things, yet must it giue good Conscience the wall and vpper-hand, as that which is farre before it in worth, vse, and necessitie. As *Salomon* of wisdom, so may it bee said of good Conscience, *Shee is more pretious then Rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to bee compared to her.* Prou. 3. 15. Gold and Rubies cannot so enrich a man as good Conscience doth, and yet alas the blindnesse of men, how willing are they in this case, with *a wilfull pouertie?* Not Rubies, but handfulls of Barley, morsells of Bread, and Crusts are preferred before the inualuable treasure of a good Conscience.

After the many worthy endeauours therefore of so many as haue

haue bin before me in this worke of labouring men to a good Conſcience: I haue aduentured alſo to lend my weake ſtrength to the ſame worke. If one or two witneſſes preuayle not, yet who knowes what an whole *cloud* may doe? Though *Eliah* and *Eliſha* be the *Horſemen and Chariots of Iſrael*, yet the Footmen doe their ſeruice in the Battell, and *Apollos* may without offence *water*, where *Paul* hath *planted*.

Now theſe my poore endeauours ſuch as they are, I am bold to publiſh vnder your Worſhipfull name, and to put them forth vnder your Patronage, entreating you to countenance that in a Treatiſe which you haue ſo long countenanced in the practiſe

tiſe. None ſo fit to bee a Patron of a Treatiſe of good conſcience, as hee that hath beene a religious doth profeſſor, and protector of the practiſe thereof. To haue a Iſa. 22.25. *Naile faſtened in a ſure place, the Antiquitie* of a long ſtanding *Name*, and *Family*, to bee hewen out of the Quarry of the beſt Stockes of Parentage, to haue faire Lines, & a faire lot in outward poſſeſſions, to bee bleſſed with a fruitfull Vine, and Oliue plants, fairly growne & planted round about a man, all theſe are to bee held high honours, and great fauours from the God of heauen. And with all theſe hath the Lord honoured your ſelfe. But yet your greateſt honour that hath giuen luſtre to all the reſt, hath beene

your

your loue to the Truth, Religion and a good Conſcience. *Auguſtine* repented him that hee attributed more to *Mallius Theodorus*, to whom he wrote a booke, then he ſhould haue done, though otherewiſe hee were a learned and Chriſtian man. A man may eaſily ouerſhoot himſelfe in the commendation of a good man, eſpecially, if a great man. It ſhall ſuffice therefore to haue ſaid ſo little, and that to this end, that hereby, the World may know the reaſon of my choice of your Patronage of this Treatiſe. It would haue beene an incongruity to haue had the name of a perſon of an euill Conſcience, prefixed before a booke of good Conſcience. I deſired a Patron ſutable

Diſplicet autem illic quod Mallio Theodoro, *ad quem librum ipſum ſcripſi, quiuis docto et Chriſtiano viro plus tribui quam deberem.* Aug. *Retr. lib.* 1 *cap.* 2.

ſutable to my ſubiect. I preſume the very ſubiect ſhall make the Treatiſe welcome to you; Be you pleaſed to affoord your acceptãce as I will affoord you my poore prayers, that the Lord who hath already ſet vpon your head the
Pro. 17. 6. *crowne of the elders, Childrens Children*, and one *crowne of glory* here
Pro. 16. 1. on earth, *Age found in the wayes of righteouſnes*, would alſo in his due time giue you that incorruptible *crowne of righteouſneſſe*, and *eternall glory* in the heauens, which that righteous Iudge ſhall giue to you, and to all thoſe that in the waies of a good Conſcience waite for the bleſſed appearance of the Lord Ieſus.

Your Worſhips in all
Chriſtian obſernance:

IER: DYKE.

The Contents of this TREATISE.

The Text containes three Maine Heads.

1. *Maine Head.* Pauls *Proteſtation of a good Conſcience, where fiue things are conſidered.*

1. *What Conſcience is.*

2. *What a good Conſcience is. It is good with a twofold goodneſſe.*

1. *With the goodneſſe of Integritie, and this integritie is threefold.*

1. *When being rightly principled by the word, it ſincerely iudges and determines of good and euill.*

2 *When it doth excuſe for good, and accuſe for euill.*

3. *When it vrges to good, and reſtraines from euill.*

2. *With the goodneſſe of Tranquilitie, and Peace. Here are three ſorts of Conſcience diſcouered not to be good, viz.*

The Contents.

1. The Ignorant
2. The Secure } Conſcience.
3. The Seared

3. The meanes of getting and keeping a good Conſcience.

1. To get and keepe the Conſcience good peaceably, or with the goodneſſe of peace, three things required,

1. Faith in Chriſts blood.
2. Repentance from dead works.
3. The conſcionable exerciſe of Prayer.

2. To get and keepe the Conſcience good with the goodneſſe of integritie, and to haue it vprightly good fiue things required, viz.

1. Walking before God.
2. Framing ones Courſe by the Rule of the word.
3. Frequent examination of the Conſcience.
4. Hearkning to the voyce of Conſcience.
5. In caſes of queſtionable nature, to take the ſureſt and the ſafeſt ſide.

4. *The markes, and notes of a good Conſcience; and they be ſeuen.*

1. *To make Conſcience of all ſinnes and duties.*
2. *To make Conſcience of ſmall ſinnes, and duties.*
3. *To affect a Miniſtery that ſpeakes to the Conſcience.*
4. *To doe duty, and avoid ſinne for Conſcience ſake.*
5. *Holy Boldneſſe.*
6. *To ſuffer for Conſcience.*
7. *Conſtancy, and Perſeuerance in Good.*

5. *The Motiues to a good Conſcience, and they are fiue.*

1. *The incomparable Comfort and Benefit of it in all ſuch Times and Caſes, as all other Comforts faile a man, and wherein a man ſtands moſt in deed of Comfort. The Caſes or Times are fiue.*

1. The Time, and Case of Disgrace, and Reproach.

2. The Time of Common feare, and Common Calamity.

3. The Time of Sickneſſe, or other croſſes.

4. The Time of death.

5. The Time and day of Iudgement.

2. That a good Conſcience is

1. A feaſt for
   1. Contentment and ſatisfaction
   2. Ioy and Mirth.
   3. Society.

2. Better then a feaſt for
   1. The Continuance.
   2. Independency.
   3. Vniuerſalitie.

3. Without a good Conſcience, all our beſt duties are naught.

4. It is the Ship and Arke of Faith.

5. The

5. The misery of a euill one.
- 1. In this world, in respect of
  - 1. Feare.
  - 2. Perplexity.
  - 3. Torment.
- 2. In the world to come.

2. *Maine Head.* Ananias *his insolent Iniunction. Whereout is obserued,*

1. *What is the respect a good Conscience findes in the world.*
2. *The impetuous iniustice of the Enemies of good Conscience.*
3. *Who commonly bee the bittereſt Enemies of good Conscience.*
4. *That Vsurpers are Smiters.*
5. *What is a sad fore runner of a Nations Ruine.*

3. *Maine Head.* Pauls *Answer and Conteſtation. Whereout is obserued.*

1. *That Christian Patience muzzels not a good Conscience from pleading its owne Innocency.*

2. *The severitie of Gods Iudgements vpon the enemies and smiters of good Conscience.*

3. *The equity of Gods administration in his execution of Iustice.*

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Good

GOOD CONSCIENCE.

ACTS 23.

1. *And* Paul *earnestly beholding the Councell, said, Men and brethren, I haue liued in all good Conscience vntill this day.*

2. *And the high Priest* Ananias *commanded them that stood by, to smite him on the mouth.*

3. *Then said* Paul *vnto him, God shall smite thee thou whited wall.*

CHAP. I.

The Introduction to the Discourse following.

THere is no cõplaint so generall as this, that the world is naught. His experience is short and slender, which will not iustifie the truth of this complaint

plaint. And what, thinke we, may the Cauſe be of the generall wickednes of our Times? Surely nothing makes *Ill Times*, but Ill men, and nothing makes *Ill Men*, but *Ill Conſciences*. Ill Conſcience is the ſource, and fountaine from whence come all iniquities, which make times here ſo ill. How well ſhould hee deſerue that could amend ill times? There is a courſe if it would be taken, that would do the deed, and ſo ceaſe the common complaint. *Eliſhaes* courſe in healing the waters of *Iericho* muſt be taken. They ſaid of their waters, as we of our times, *The water is naught, and the ground barren*, 2 Kings 2.19. What courſe now takes *Eliſha* for healing of the waters? *Hee went out vnto the ſpring of the waters, and caſt the ſalt in there*. ver. 21. *So the waters were healed*, verſ. 22. The ſpring, and fountaine of all actions good or euill is the Conſcience, and all actions and courſes of men are as their Conſciences. Out of the heart *are the iſſues of life*. Prov. 4.23. The Heart and Conſcience

Hominum ſunt iſta nõ Temporum. Senec. ep. 98

ſcience is the fountaine, euery action of a mans life is an *Iſſue*, a little, riuelet, and a water paſſage thence. Are theſe *waters* then that *iſſue* thence *Naught?* The way to heale them is to *caſt the ſalt into the ſpring*. Mend the Conſcience and all is mended. *Good Conſciences* would make *Good men*, and *Good men* would make *Good Times*. Lo here a Proiect for the reformation of euill Times.

Non erit fructus bonus niſi arboris bonæ, Muta Cor, et mutabitur opus, Aug. de verb. Dom. Serm. 12.

Were this Proiect ſet on foot, and a good cõſcience ſet vp, how ſhould we ſee profanation of Gods holy Name, & Day, Iniuſtice, Bribery, Oppreſſion, Deceit, Adulteries, and whoredomes, & all other Iniquities, how ſhould we ſee all theſe as our Sauiour ſaw Satan, *falling down like lightning from heauen?* How ſhould we ſee them come tumbling downe like ſo many *Dagons*, before Gods Arke, yea tumbled downe, and broken to the ſtumps? The onely Arke that muſt daſh, and ding downe theſe *Dagons* is a good conſcience.

And if we would wel weigh the matter

ter what is there equally deſirable with a good Cõſcience? What is that men would haue, but they deſire to haue it *good*? And yet amongſt al other things they deſire to haue *Good*, what little care to haue the Cõſciẽce ſuch? Wife, childrõ, ſeruants, houſes, lands, Ayre, food, rayment, who would not haue theſe *Good*? And yet that, without which none of all theſe are good, nor will yeeld vs any true good, that alone is neglected, and whileſt men would haue all other things *good*, yet their cõſciẽces & thẽſelues are *naught*, Now alas, what good, will all other goods do vs whilſt this one, and this maine *Good* thing is wanting! How excellẽt is this *Good* aboue al other good things? A *good* wife, *good* children, *good* land, &c. theſe may a man haue, & yet he himſelfe not *Good*, theſe finde men ſometimes *Good*, but make none ſo; theſe goods may a man haue and yet himſelfe bee Naught. Not ſo, with good Cõnſcience, which no euill man can haue, which whoſoeuer hath, to makes

Ecce quid prodeſt plena bonis arca cum ſit inanis Conſcientia! Bona vis habere & bonus non vis eſſe, ũ quid eſt, quod vis habere malũ? Nihil omnino, non vxorem, non filium, non ancillã, villãm, tunicã poſtremo nõ caligam, et tamen vis habere malã vitam. Rogo te, præpone vitam tuam, caligæ tuæ (ſit Conſcientiam) Aug. *ibid. vbi ſupra. Ipſa ergo diuitiæ bonæ ſunt ſed iſta omnia bona*

makes him and all hee hath *good*. So great and ſo good a *Good*, why is it ſo much neglected?

Try we therefore, & let vs aſſay if by any means, Gods good bleſſing giuing aſſiſtance, we may be able to ſtirre vp men, and to worke them to regard ſo great & ſo excellent a good. It may be at leaſt ſome few may be perſwaded, & may ſet vpõ this worke of getting a good Conſcience. If but ſome few, if but one be wrought vpõ, the labour is not in vaine. If none, yet our worke is with our God, to whom *we are a ſweet ſauour in Chriſt, in them that are ſaued, & in them that periſh.* 2 Cor. 2. 15.

a bonis & malis haberi poſſunt. Et cũ bona ſint bonos tamen facere non poſſunt. Aug. *de verb. Do. Serm. 5.*

This portion of Scripture then which I haue choſen for the ground of the following Diſcourſe conſiſts of three parts.

1. *Pauls* ſober and ingenuous *profeſſion*, and *Proteſtation*, verſe. 1.
2. *Ananias* his inſolent, & Impetuous *Iniunction*, verſ. 2.
3. *Pauls* zealous *Anſwer*, and *Conteſtation*, verſ. 3.

1. The

1. The firſt is *Pauls Proteſtatiõ* in theſe words; *Men and brethren I haue liued in all good Conſcience vntill this day*. With this Proteſtation of a good conſcience *Paul* begins his Plea. And how euer to diſtinguiſh our ſelues frõ Papiſts. we beare the name of *Proteſtants*, yet wee ſhall neuer be found and good Proteſtants indeed, till we can take vp *Pauls Proteſtation*, that our care, indeauour, & courſe is to liue in *All good Conſcience*. A Proteſtant with a looſe & a naughty Cõſciẽce, hath no great cauſe to glory in his deſertion of the Romiſh Religion. As good a *blind Papiſt*, as a *halting Proteſtant*. The *blind* & the *halt* were equally abominable vnto the Lord.

Paul was here brought forth to anſwer for himſelfe before the chiefe Prieſts and the Counſell: And his Preface, as I ſaid, to his intẽded Apology, if he had not bin iniuriouſly interrupted, is a *Proteſtation* of the goodnes of his Conſcience, and this his good Conſcience, or the goodneſſe of his Conſcience he ſets forth;

1. From

1. From his *Conuerſation*, πολίτευμα, I haue liued, or converſed. A good converſatiō is a good euidence of a good Conſcience indeed, there can be no good Conſcience, where there is not a Converſing in good. It is not ſome moods & fits in ſome good actions, & duties, from whence conſcience gaines the reputation of goodnes; but a good conuerſation, godly & religious in the general tenour therof, proues the conſcience worthy ſuch an honor, as to be holden good. He may be ſaid to *haue a* good cōſcience that can be ſaid to *liue* in a good Conſcience. Many a man is frequent in the Citie, and yet cannot be ſaid to liue there. There a man liues where he hath his Conuerſe and Reſidence. A mans life is not to be meaſured by ſome few actions, in which at ſometime he may be found; but by his generall courſe & conuerſation. God wil iudge euery man not according to his *ſteps*, but according to his *waies*. It were ouer-rigid cenſoriouſnes to cōdemne a righteous man, & to queſtion whether

whether his cõſcience were good; becauſe ſome ſteps of his haue bin beſide the way. We know for the general his way is good wherein hee walkes, and therefore according to his good way we iudge his Conſcience good. Contrarily when we ſee a mans way for the generall to be euill, though ſometime hee may tread a right ſtep or two, and chance to chop into the faire road for a rod or two; for this to iudge a mans Conſcience good, were a bottomleſſe and a boundleſſe Charitie. Euery mans Conſcience is as his life is.

2. From the *Generalitie* of his care, & obedience. *In all good Cõſcience.* It muſt be *All good*, or is it *no good* cõſcience at all. There be that liue in *ſome* good Conſcience, yea *Herod* ſeemes to haue *much* good Conſcience, hee did many things gladly, but yet *Paul* goes further, and liues not in *ſome*, not in *much*, but in *All* good Conſcience.

3. From the *Sincerity*, and *Integritie of it before God.* Before men how many haue their Conſciences exceeding good

good, and yet their conſciences are fat ſhort of goodnes, becauſe they are not good *before God*, the iudge of conſcience. Whilſt conſcience is made only of the Capitals of the ſecond Table, or of the externals and ceremonials of the firſt, which duty is not done out of obedience to God and his Commandements; but a mans ſelfe either in his gaine, or in his prayſe is ſought, and baſe ends are the firſt mouers to good duties, here the conſcience what euer applauſe it hath from, or before men for it goodneſſe; yet of God ſhall not be ſo eſteemed. For that is not a good conſcience which is one outwardly, but which is one inwardly, whoſe praiſe is not of men but of God. And that hath its praiſe of God which is before God.

4. From his *continuance, & conſtancie, vntill this day.* To begin a good life, and courſe, & to liue in all good conſcience, & that before God are excellent things, but yet one thing is wanting to make vp this goodneſſe com-

pleat. To bee ſo for a day, or ſome dayes will not ſerue, but when a man can ſay at his laſt day, I haue liued in al good conſcience *vntill this day*, that man may bee ſafely iudged to haue a good conſcience indeed. Thus in theſe foure particulars doth the goodnes of *Pauls* conſcience appeare. It is not my purpoſe to cõfine my ſelfe & to keepe mee within thoſe bounds alone: but to take a larger latitude, within the compaſſe whereof I will bring both thoſe forenamed, and all other materiall points which this *Proteſtation* doth afford.

CHAP. II.

Conſcience deſcribed.

THe maine ſubiect of this proteſtation, and the ayme of this following diſcourſe being concerning a *good conſcience*, for the more orderly handling thereof, conſider theſe ſpecialls.

1. What

1. What *Conſcience* is.
2. What a *good Conſcience* is.
3. How a good conſcience *may bee gotten and kept*. The meanes of it.
4. How a good conſcience *may bee knowne*. The markes of it.
5. The *motiues* to get and keepe a good conſcience.

1. *What conſcience is*: It may be thus deſcribed. Conſcience *is a power and faculty of the ſoule taking knowledge, and bearing witneſſe of all a mans thoughts, words & actions, & accordingly excuſing or accuſing abſoluing or condemning, comforting or tormenting the ſame.* I know there be other definitions giuen by others more ſuccinct, and neat, but I father chuſe this though it may bee not altogether ſo formall to the rules of Art. The rules of loue and profit many times may make bold to diſpence with rules of Art. So I may be profitable, I care the leſſe to be artificiall. It may ſuffice that this deſcription is anſwerable to that Auditory for whoſe ſake it was firſt intended. A plaine familiar

deſcription agrees well enough with ſuch a people. For the better conceiuing of it let it be taken in pieces, and euery parcell viewed ſeuerally.

It is a faculty or power of the ſoule. It is therfore called the *Heart*, 1. *Iohn.* 3.20. *If our heart condemne vs.* *Ec.* 7.22. *Thine own heart knowes that thou thy ſelfe likewiſe haſt curſed others*, that is, thine own conſcience knowes. It is alſo called the *ſpirit of man*, 1. *Cor.* 2. 11 *For what man knowes the things of a man, ſaue the* ſpirit of man *which is in him.* And *Rom.* 8. 16. *The ſpirit it ſelfe beares witneſſe with our ſpirit*, that is, with our conſcience. Not that conſcience is a ſpirit diſtinct from the ſubiect of the ſoule, as *Origen* miſtooke, but becauſe it is a faculty of the ſoule, therefore the name that is oft giuen to the ſoule, is giuen to it. It it be asked in what part of the ſoule this faculty is placed, we muſt know that Conſcience is not confined to any one part of the ſoule: It is not in the vnderſtanding alone, not in the memory, will, or affections alone, but it hath

place

place in all the parts of the ſoule, and according to the ſeuerall parts thereof hath ſeuerall Offices, or acts.

Taking knowledge: *Eccl.*7.22. Thine owne heart *knowes*. Conſcience is placed in the ſoule as Gods ſpy, and mans ſuperiour and ouerſeer, & inſeparable companion that is with a man at all times, and in all places, ſo that there is not a thought, word, or worke that it knowes not, and takes not notice of. So that that which *Dauid* ſpeakes of God himſelfe. *Pſal.*139.3.4. *Thou compaſſeſt my heart, and my lying downe, and art acquainted with all my waies, for there is not a word in my tongue but loe thou knoweſt it altogether. Whither ſhall I goe from thy ſpirit! If I aſcend vp to heauen, &c.* The ſame may be alſo ſaid of conſcience, Gods deputy; it is acquainted with all our wayes, not a motion in the minde, not a ſyllable in the mouth, to which it is not priuy: yea it is thus inſeparably preſent with vs not only to ſee, but alſo to ſet downe, to regiſter, and to put downe vpon Record all our

thoughts, words, and workes. Conſcience is Gods Notary, and there is nothing paſſes vs in our whole life good or ill, which cõſcience notes not down with an indeleble character, which nothing can raze out but Chriſts blood. Conſcience doth in this kinde as *Iob* wiſhes in another, *Iob* 19.23.24. *Oh that my words were now written, Oh that they were printed in a booke, That they were grauen with an iron pen, and laid in the rocke for euer.* Conſcience prints and writes ſo ſurely, ſo indelebly, yea it writes mens ſins as *Iudah* his ſinne was, *with a pen of Iron, with the point of a diamond, and they are grauen vpon the Table of their hearts, Ierem.* 17. 1. Conſcience doth in our pilgrimage as trauellers in their iourney, it keepes a Diary, or a iournall of euery thing that paſſes in our whole courſe, it keepes a booke in which it hath a mans whole life pend. In regard of this office conſcience is placed in the memory, & is the Regiſter and Recorder of the ſoule.

And bearing witneſſe. This wee finde

Rom. 2. 15.

Nam quocunque me verto, vitia mea me ſequuntur, vbicunq; vado conſcientia mea me nõ deſerit, ſe præſens adſiſtit, & quicquid facio ſcribit. Idcirco quanquam humana ſubterfugia iudicia, iudicium propriæ conſcientiæ fugere non valeo. Et ſi hominibus celo quod egi, mihi tamen (qui noui malũ quod geſſi) celare nequeo Ber. de Inter. Com. c. 31

*Rom.*2.15.their conſcience alſo *bearing witneſſe*. *Rom.*9.1. My conſcience alſo *bearing me witnes*.2 *Cor.*1.12. *This teſtimony* of our conſcience. And this the end of the former office of the conſcience.For therefore it is exact and punctuall in ſetting downe the particulars of a mans whole life, that it may bee a faithfull witneſſe eyther for him, or againſt him.*For a faithfull witnes cannot lie*. *Pro.*14.5. This office it is ready to doe,at all times of triall,affliction,and moſt of all at the laſt day, the day of Iudgement,when it ſhall be more ſolemnly called in to giue in euidence, *Rom.*2.15.16. *Their conſcience bearing witnes,&c.In the day whē God ſhall iudge ſecrets of men.* At that day it ſhal eſpecially witnes either for or againſt a man; if our life and actions haue been good, it will then doe like the true witneſſe, *Pro.*14.25. *A true witnes deliuers ſoules.* If wicked & vngodly,it will deale with it as *Iob* complaines God did with him *Iob.*10.17. *Thou reneweſt thy witneſſe againſt me*.It will teſtifie according to e-

Peccata mea celare non poſſum, quoniam quocunque vado conſc. mea mecum eſt, ſecū protans quod in ea poſui ſiue bonum, ſiue malum, ſeruat vivo, reſtituet defuncto depoſitum quod ſeruandum accepit. Bern. med. de vot c.14.

uery mans deeds. And this teſtimonie of conſcience is without all exception, for in the mouth of two or three witneſſes euery word ſhall ſtand, and conſcience (as our common ſaying is) is a thouſand witneſſes: for it is an eye-witneſſe of all our actions, yea a pen-witneſſe, bringing teſtimonie from the authentique Records & Regiſter of the Court of Conſcience. Concerning this teſtifying office of Conſcience that place is worth the noting *Eſa.* 59. 12. *For our tranſgreſsions are multiplied before thee, & our ſins teſtifie againſt vs, for our tranſgreſsions are with vs, and as for our iniquities we know them.* By which place wee may know the meaning of the word Conſcience. Conſcience is a *knowledge together*. How together? Firſt, a knowledge together with another perſon, namely with God, when God and a mans heart know a thing, there is Conſcience, knowledge together *Rom.* 9. 1. My conſcience (συμμαρτυρουσης) Co-witneſſing, witneſſing together. How together? God knowes it & wit-

witneſſes, and my conſcience together with him knows & witneſſes. Secondly a knowledge ioyned together with another knowledge; for there is a double act of the vnderſtanding. Firſt, that whereby wee thinke or know a thing. Secondly, there is a reflecting act of the ſoule whereby wee thinke what we thinke, and know what wee know, and this is the action of the Conſcience; and this ioyning of this ſecond knowledge to the firſt, giues it the name of Conſcience. As here in this place, As for our iniquities wee know them, that is, we know that wee haue had euil thoughts, and our knowledge tels vs, & witneſſes to vs that we haue done ſo. This agrees with *Bernards* definition, that *Conſcientia eſt cordis ſcientia*; Conſcience is the knowledge of the heart, namely paſſiuely. It is the knowing of what the heart knowes: which others in better tearmes haue expreſſed thus, Conſcience is the recoyling of the ſoule vpon it ſelf. Suitable to that of the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 4. 4. *I know*

know nothing by my ſelfe. As if he had ſaid, I know not any thing that I know againſt my ſelfe, my Conſcience doth not witneſſe againſt mee. And this ſecond office of Conſcience in bearing witneſſe is alſo in the memory.

And accordingly accuſing or excuſing, abſoluing or condemning] Theſe acts of Conſcience we finde *Rom.* 2. 15. *Their thoughts accuſing or excuſing one another. Rom.* 14. 22. Happy is he that *condemneth* not himſelf in that he allows. The ground of theſe acts is this; Conſcience, before actions are to be done, determines of their lawfulneſſe, & vnlawfulneſſe; iudges of them whether they be good or euill. And if it iudge them good, it inuites, ſtirres vp, vrges, and bindes to the doing of them. *Rom.* 13. 5. Ye muſt be ſubiect *for conſcience ſake*; that is, becauſe Conſcience determines it to be good, & vrges, & binds thereunto. Hence that phraſe in common ſpeech, my conſcience vrgeth me to it, or he was vrged in conſcience to do it, and I am bound in conſcience to doe

do it, Certainly if it iudge and determine actions to be euill and vnlawful, then it binds from them. So much that ſpeech implies, 1 *Cor.* 10. 27. Eate, aſking no queſtion, *for conſcience ſake*. So that Conſcience hath a power to bind to, and to binde from.

Now then when a man in his particular actions doth follow the Preſcriptions, Dictates, Iniunctions, Prohibitions, & Determinations of conſcience, and hearkens to the incitements therof, then cõſcience *excuſes* him, acquits and *abſolues* him. But if in his actions he goe againſt any of theſe, then Conſcience *accuſes* him of offence, and *condemnes* him for that offence. The *accuſation* of conſcience hath reſpect vnto a mans *guilt*, the *condemnation* of it vnto a mans *puniſhment*. *Accuſation* is an act of Conſcience paſſing ſentence vpon a mans action, as when conſcience tels him; This was ill done, this action was ſinfull. *Condemnation* is an act of conſcience, paſſing ſentence not onely vpon a mans action, but vpon a mans

mans perſon, as when it tels him, Thou deſerueſt Gods wrath for this ſin. Conſcience in accuſing ſhewes what is the *quality*; in condemning what is the *deſert* of a mans action. And theſe actions of Conſcience are in the mind, and vnderſtanding part of the ſoule. The act of Conſcience in the memory determines *de facto*, and tels vs what we haue done, or not done. The act of Conſcience in the vnderſtanding determines *de iure*, and tels vs whether we haue done well or ill, and ſo accordingly either excuſes or accuſes, acquits or condemnes.

Comforting or tormenting the ſame] theſe be the laſt acts of conſcience following the former. If Conſcience determining, preſcribing, and inciting to good, be hearkned vnto, then it excuſes, acquits, and thereupon followes comfort, ioy, hope, 2 *Cor.* 1.12. This is *our reioycing*, the teſtimony of our conſcience. Contrarily, if the dictates of conſcience be not regarded, it accuſes & condemnes, & then torments with feare,

feare, griefe, deſpaire, and violent perturbations, in all which is that *worme*. *Marke* 9.44. And theſe actions of the Conſcience are in the will, and in the affections. And thus according to the diuers parts of the ſoule, the acts and office of conſcience are diuers. In the memory it hath the office of a Notary, Regiſter, and Witneſſe. In the vnderſtanding it hath the office of a Iudge, and an Accuſer, of a *Felix* and a *Tertullus*. In the affections either of a Comforter, or Tormenter.

Sic in domo propria & à propria familia habeo accuſatores, teſtes, iudices, & tortores, Accuſat me conſcien. teſtis eſt memoria, voluntas carcer, timor tortor, ablectamentum tor. mentum. Bern. med. de vot. c. 13

The ſumme of all may be thus knit vp. Conſcience containes three things:

1. Knowledge practicall.
2. Applicatiõ of that knowledge to our particular eſtates, and actions.
3. Thoſe affections, which ariſe thereupon.

Now the ſpeciall worke of Conſcience conſiſts in the ſecond, in the applying our knowledge to our eſtates and actions. Now in this application it lookes on things paſt, or preſent, ſimply as things, and ſo it witneſſes of them

them to be done, or not done, *Eccl.*7. 22. Or elſe it lookes at the good or euill of things paſt, preſent, & to come. if things paſt, or preſent, ſeeme good, it excuſes; if euill, it accuſes and bites, *Rom.*2.15. If things to be done ſeeme good, it excites, vrges, and bindes to the doing thereof. If euill, it vges, and bindes there-from. Now according to theſe ſeueral acts there follow in vs diuers affections, ioy, hope, feare, griefe, and the like. The whole proceſſe of the worke of Conſcience fals within the frame of a practicall Syllogiſme, as for example.

Super vos etiam poſuit ad cuſtodiendum ſi deliquiſſent qui accuſarent, qui teſtificarentur, qui iudicarent, qui punirent: conſc. quippe eſt accuſatrix, memoria teſtis, ratio iudex, timor carnifex. Bern. hom. de vill. iniq.

Euery one that ſins in betraying innocent blood, is worthy of Gods wrath. But I (ſaith Iudas) *haue ſinned in betraying innocent blood, therefore I am worthy of Gods wrath.*

Conſcientia Synteresis eſt, qua victi voluptatibus vel furore ipſaq; interdum rationis decepti ſimilitudine nos peccare ſentimus. Hieronym. in Eccl. cap. 1.

Here the *Maior* is knowledge practicall, the rule and law by which Conſcience keeps her Court. This is *Synteresis.*

The

The *Minor* that is *Syneideſis*, the proper worke of conſcience applying that knowledge, and generall rule for a mans particular eſtate, or action. Here Conſcience witneſſes concerning the fact, iudges of the qualitie of it, and accordingly accuſes, or excuſes.

The Concluſion is the ſentence of Conſcience abſoluing or condemning, and accordingly cheering or ſtinging, comforting or tormenting a man.

Syntereſis eſt promptuarium principiorũ ſeu regularum practicarum: cius officium eſt regulas legis diuinæ proferre, & conſc ſubminiſtrare, vt illarum ope poſſit cenſorem agere de propriis actionibus. Alſted. Theol. Caſ. cap. 2.

CHAP. III.

A good Conſcience what it is: falſe ones diſcouered.

WHat Conſcience is we haue ſeene; The ſecond thing conſiderable, is what a good Conſcience is. The Conſcience that is good, muſt bee good with a double goodneſſe.

1. With the goodneſſe of *Integritie.*
2. With the goodnes of *Tranquility.*

Vpright-

Vprightneſſe, and *Peace*; theſe two are required to the conſtitution of a good Conſcience.

Firſt, it is good with the goodneſſe of *Integrity*, when it is an vpright conſcience. This is that which *Paul* cals *A pure conſcience*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 3. which phraſe a man would almoſt thinke in his conſcience that the holy Ghoſt vſed on ſet purpoſe, to ſtop the mouth of the iniquity of the latter times, that ſhould ſeeke to diſgrace all good Conſcience with the ſarcaſme of purity. Now the Conſcience is good with the goodneſſe of Integritie and purity three wayes.

1 When it being informed & rightly principled by the word of God, the only rule and binder of Conſcience, it doth truely and ſincerely iudge, & determine euill to be euill, and good to be good. As contrarily, the conſcience is ſinfully euil, when it doth not determine that to be euil which is euill, nor that to be good which is good, but cals euill good, and good euill. Such as are the

the Conſciences of Ignorant perſons, who wanting the knowledge of Gods Word, and hauing their conſciences blinded through ignorance, are not able to iudge of good or euill, nor to diſcerne & determine which is wch. So that knowledge is neceſſarily required to the goodneſſe of Conſcience. *Rom.* 15.14. *Ye alſo are ful of goodnes, filled with all knowledge.* The Conſcience cannot bee good where the ſoule is naught, and *that the ſoule bee without knowledge, it is not good.* Prou. 9.2.

2. When it doth excuſe for that which is good, and accuſe for that which is euill, being ſanctified by the ſpirit of grace: for the accuſation of conſcience though it follow vpon ſin, yet it is not ſinfull, and euill in it ſelfe, but onely painefull and troubleſome, and ſo oppoſed to the goodnes of peace, not to the goodnes of vprightnes, according to that trite diſtinction of *Bernard* of a good Conſcience and not quiet, and a quiet conſcience, and not good. It is the property of a conſcience vpright-

ly good, to accuſe vpon any ſinne committed. As contrarily the conſcience is ſinfully euill, when it doth not excuſe for good, nor accuſe for euill. The ſuperſtitious perſon, omitting his ſopperies, ſhould bee excuſed by his conſcience, whereas he rather receiues blame from his Conſcience, therefore his Conſcience is ſinfully euill. The ſecure perſons Conſcience is naught, becauſe he hauing committed ſinne, his Conſcience is ſilent, and lets him alone, and brings in no accuſation againſt him, therefore it is ſinfully euill. It is *a witneſſe* that hath *ſeene*, and *knowne* euill, and doth *not vtter it*, therefore it *ſhall beare its iniquity*, Leuit. 5. 1.

3. When it doth incite and vrge vs to doe good, and doth ſtay and hinder from euill. It is vprightly good when it ſpurs to good, and bridles from euil. *Heb.* 13. 18. *For wee are aſſured that we haue a good Conſcience.* viz. A Conſcience that is neither ſilent to perſwade to that which is good, or diſſwade frō that which is euill. If a man goe about, or

or be ready to yeeld to any thing that is ſinfull, how will it muſter vp legions of Arguments, how will it wraſtle & ſtruggle with a man? It will ſay as *Abner* to *Ioab*, 2 *Sam.* 2. 26. *Knoweſt thou not that it will be bitternes in the latter end?* or as *Abigail* to *Dauid*, 1 Sam. 25. 31. *It ſhall bee no griefe, nor offence of heart vnto thee* another time, not to haue done this euill. If a man be negligēt, or careleſſe, & drowſie in good duties, it comes to him with that voyce, *Epheſ.* 5. 14. *Awake thou that ſleepeſt*; or with that, *Iſa.* 30. 21. *This is the way walke in it.* When it doth thus, it is vprightly good. Contrarily, it is ſinfully euill, when it doth not incite vs to that which is good, nor hinder vs from doing euill. This is a dead, and a ſeared conſcience. 1. *Tim.* 4. 2. *Hauing their conſciences ſeared with an hot yron.*

2. It is good with the goodneſſe of *Tranquility*. And that is when the conſcience is at Peace, and doth not accuſe vs, becauſe it hath not wherewith to accuſe vs, either becauſe not guilty of

ſuch or ſuch a particular fact. 1. *Cor.* 4. 4 *I know nothing by my ſelfe*, or elſe becauſe it is aſſured of pardon, in the blood of Chriſt, by which wee come to haue no *more Conſcience of ſins*, Heb. 10. 2. That is, no more Conſcience to accuſe or condemne for ſinne, it being done away in the blood of Chriſt: and this is the *purged Conſcience*, Heb. 9. 14. which brings Hope, Ioy, Comfort, & confidence with it. 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. *This is our reioycing, the teſtimony of our Conſcience.* Then is the Conſcience good when it is peaceable. As contrarily, then it is euill, painfully euill, when it is turbulent, & troubleſome in the accuſations thereof, and binds ouer to Iudgement, and ſo leaues vs in ſhame, feare, perplexity, & griefe. 1 *Iohn.* 3. 20 *If our heart cõdemne vs.* This is a wounded, a troubled conſcience. This is oft the euill Conſcience of euill men. *Iſa.* 57. 21. *There is no peace to the wicked, ſaith my God.* Yet may a man haue his conſcience vprightly good, which is painefully euill, for a good mans Conſcience

ſcience may bee vnquiet and troubled. Thus then wee ſee what a good Conſcience is, that which is vprightly honeſt, and quietly peaceable. This being ſo, it ſerues to diſcouer the dangerous errour of diuers ſorts of people, that are in a dreame of hauing good Conſciences, and yet hauing nothing leſſe. There be three ſorts of conſciences, which becauſe they are in ſome ſort quiet, and ſting not, their owners would haue to goe for good ones, and yet are ſtarke nought, and they are, The *Ignorant*; The *Secure*, and the *Seared* Conſcience.

1. The *Ignorant* conſcience Men iudge of their ignorant conſciences, as they doe of their blind, dumbe and ignorant Miniſters. Such neither do nor can Preach, can neither tel men of their ſinnes, nor of their duties. Aske ſuch a blind guides people, what their conceit is of him, & what a kinde of man their Miniſter is, and yee ſhall haue him magnified for a paſſing honeſt harmeleſſe man, and a man wondrous

quiet amongſt his neighbours. They may doe what they will for him, he is none of thoſe troubleſome fellowes that will be reprouing their faults, or complaining of their diſorders in the Pulpit; oh, ſuch a one is a quiet good man indeed. Thus iudge many of their Conſciences. If their Conſciences be quiet, and lye not grating vpon them, and telling them that their courſes are ſinfull and damnable, and that their perſons are in a dangerous condition, but rather by their ſilence, ignorance and vaine pretences doe iuſtifie them, and tell them all will bee well enough, Oh then what excellent good Conſciences haue theſe men! They make no Conſcience of Familie duties, once in the yeere to come to the Sacrament ſerues the turne; they are common ſwearers in their ordinary communication make no Conſcience of ſanctifing Sabbaths, &c. and their Conſciences let them alone in all theſe, doe not giue them one ſyllable of ill language, oh what gentle, and good natured conſciences

ſciences thinke theſe men they haue? But alas, what *euill* conſciences haue they. A good conſcience muſt bee *vpright* as well as *peaceable*. And an vpright Conſcience is enlightned with the knowledge of the Word, and by that light iudges what is good, and what is euill, and when it findes mens actions not to be good & warrātable, deales plainely, and lets them heare of it. A good Conſcience hath good eies, and is able to diſcerne betweene good and euill. Now theſe mens conſciences are quiet, & haue their mouthes ſhut, but whence is it? Becauſe their eyes are ſhut, and they are dumbe, becauſe they are blind. Right Idoll cōſciences, they want mouthes to ſpeake, becauſe they want eyes to ſee. So that it may be ſaid of ſuch conſciences as the Prophet ſpeakes of thoſe Watchmen, *Iſa.* 56 10. *His watchmen are blind, they are all ignorant, they are all dumbe dogs, they cānot bark*. Their blindnes bred dumbneſſe, and their ignorance ſilence. Thus is it with ignoront conſciences. What

is the reaſon they barke not, but are dumbe, and are thus quiet? Meerely becauſe they are blinde and ignorant.

But yet as good as men account theſe Conſciences now, the time will come that it ſhall fare with thē as it did with *Adam* and *Eue* after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, *Then their eyes were opened.* So the time will come when theſe Conſciences ſhall haue their eies op ened,& then alſo ſhall their mouths be opened,yea wide,& lowd opened, and theſe now quiet Conſciences ſhall both barke and bite too. Do not therfore flatter thy ſelf in thine ignorance, as if thy condition,& conſcience were good, becauſe quiet. Neuer account that true Peace which is not ioyned with vprightnes. Integrity & ignorāce can no more ſtand together,then light and darkneſſe. Integrity of conſcience may be without Peace, Peace can neuer be without Integritie. Dumbe Miniſters goe in the world for good Miniſters,becauſe quiet ones,but the day will come that men ſhall curſe them for

for hauing beene ſo quiet. So ignorant and tongue-tyed conſciences goe for good ones, but the time wil come that men will curſe this peace of their conſcience, for bringing them ſo quietly to hell. The Maſſe goes for an excellēt good ſeruice, becauſe *Miſſa non mordet*, honeſt toothleſſe deuotion, it neuer faſtens fang in the hearers fleſh. So many haue Maſſe-like conſciences, toothleſſe, and tongueleſſe conſciences, but yet the time will come, that as Maſſemongers ſhall curſe their toothleſſe Maſſe, ſo ignorant perſons that now glory in their peace, ſhall curſe their toothleſſe conſcience, yea they ſhall gnaſh their teeth, becauſe Conſcience had no teeth, and ſhall gnaw their tongues for anguiſh of heart, becauſe their conſciences wanted tongues to tell them of the danger of their wicked wayes, that haue brought them to ſo miſerable a condition.

2. The *ſecure* conſcience. As the blind Conſcience was like the dumbe Miniſter, ſo the ſecure conſcience is like

like the flattering Miniſter, that (*Ier* 6. 13.) heales the hurt of his people with *ſweet words, and cryes, peace, peace, where there is no peace*. This conſcience wants not an eye, but only a good tongue in the head. It ſees its maſter to do euill, and knowes it to bee euill, but either cares not to ſpeake, or elſe is eaſily put off from ſpeaking, ſometime it cares not to ſpeake, being ſleepy, heauy, and drowſie, like thoſe Prophets, *Iſ.* 56. 10 *They are all dumbe dogges, they cannot barke*. What is the reaſon? *Sleeping, lying downe, louing to ſlumber*. A ſleepy, and heauy-eyde Curre, though he ſee one come into his maſters yarde, or houſe, that ſhould not, yet barkes not, as loath by his barking, to diſquiet himſelfe. A ſleepy ſecure Conſcience ſees many a ſin to enter the ſoule that ſhould not, and yet lyes ſtill, and ſayes nothing, is loath to breake its ſleepe. And yet ſuch Conſciences men count good.

Sometimes it may be it offers to ſpeak, as a ſleepy dog may open once, or

or twiſe at a ſtrangers entrance, yet is ſoone ſnibd, the leaſt word of the maſter of the houſe makes him whiſt, and quiet. So, ſecure Conſciences vpon the greene wound begin to ſmart, and vpon the freſh commiſſion of ſinne begin to mutter, & to haue ſome grudgings, but their maſter anſwers them as the friend in his bed did his neighbour, deſiring to borrow three loaues, *Luc.* 11. 17. *Trouble me not, for I am in bed.* I pray thee bee quiet, let vs haue no wrangling & brawling, it ſhall be ſo no more, I will cry God mercy, I wil hereafter finde a time for repentance, &c. & ſo conſcience being ſecure is eaſily put off with a few good words, and ſo cloſing her eyes, and mouth againe giues her maſter libertie to take his reſt. And thus the ſecure cõſcience, becauſe it is ſo eaſily huſht, and ſtilld, is counted a good conſcience, as Nurces count thẽ good childrẽ which though they are ready to cry at euery turne, yet are eaſily quieted with ſome toy.

But this conſcience is as farre from a good

good Conſcience, as Securitie is from Integritie. Sin indeed ſleepes, but yet it ſleepes but dogſleepe, yea though it ſleepe ſoundly, yet it cannot ſleepe long. *Gen.*4.7. *Sin lies at the doore.* Sin lies aſleepe in the Conſcience as a Maſtife lies at the doore. A place where a dog cannot ſleepe long. The doore is the common paſſage into, & out of the houſe, euery one is paſſing to and fro that way, and keepe ſuch a clattering with the opening and ſhutting of the doore, that there can be no ſound, or at leaſt no long ſleepe. No better is the ſleepe of ſecure conſciences, which at length like mad ban-dogs and fell Maſtifes, will fly in the face of the ſinner, ready to plucke out the very throat & heart of him.

The ſecure Conſcience can bee no good Conſcience, becauſe it hath neither *vprightnes*, nor *peace*, both which were before required to the tẽper of a good one. *Vprightnes* hath it none, for it is not faithfull in its office, it doth not witneſſe, it doth not accuſe, as it be-

becomes an honeſt vpright conſcience to doe. *Peace* it hath none. There is a great difference betweene a peace, and a truce. In peace there is a totall depoſition, both of Armes and Enmitie, all hoſtile affections are put off: In a truce, there is but a ſuſpenſion, & a ceſſation of Armes for a ſeaſon, ſo as during the ſame there is ſtill prouiſion of more Force, and a preparation of greater ſtrength. A truce is but a breathing time to fit for fiercer impreſſions. The truce being ended, the aſſaults are rather fiercer thē they were before. The ſecure conſciences are quiet, not becauſe there is peace, for *there is no peace to the wicked, ſaith my God. Iſa.* 57. 21. But becauſe there is ſome truce, the world ſmiles vpon them & they haue outward hearts eaſe, and this brings them aſleepe, but if any affliction, croſſe, or ſickneſſe come, then they ſee how farre they are from peace. Conſcience is ſometime at truce with ſecure ſinners, but during this truce, conſcience is preparing Armes, and Ammunition

Quomodo tranquilla? cum mundi huius proſperitas alludit, & illudit, cum laudatur peccator in deſideriis animæ ſuæ. Bern. de Conſe.

munition againſt them, is leuying of freſh Forces againſt them, and aſſoone as the truce is ended, be it ſooner or be it later, haue at them with more violence, fury, and fierceneſſe then euer before. And the truce once ended, it will eaſily appeare, what a wide breadth of difference there is betweene a ſecure and a good conſcience.

3. A *Seared* conſcience. That which *Paul* ſpeakes of, 1 *Tim.*4.2. *A cauterized Conſcience*. That is, as *Beza* tranſlates and expounds it. A Conſcience cut off, as it were with a Chirurgions Inſtrument. An arme, or, a leg cut off from the body, ſtab it, gaſh it, chop it into gobbets, do what you wil with it, it is inſenſible, it feeles it not. Or elſe as our tranſlation hath it, *Hauing their conſciences ſeared with an hot yron.* A compariſon borrowed from Chirurgerie. When a limb is cut off, Chirurgions vſe to ſeare that part of the Body from whence the other is taken, with an hot yron, and ſometimes they doe cures by ſearing the affected parts with

with hot yrons. Now theſe parts vpon their ſearing haue a kinde of cruſty brawnineſſe, which is vtterly inſenſible, which though it be cut, or pricked it neither bleeds, nor feeles. Thus is it with many mens Conſciences, commit they whatſoeuer ſinnes they will, yet their hearts are ſo hardened through long cuſtome in ſin, that they feele no gripings, pinches, or bitings at all, but are growne to that dead, and dedolent diſpoſition, *Eph.* 4. 19. *Who being paſt feeling, &c.* It is with ſuch mens conſciences, as with labouring mens hands, which through much labour haue a brawny hardneſſe growing vpon them which is without any feeling. One may thruſt pins into it, pare it with a knife, and yet without any trouble or griefe at all. Such callous Conſciences haue many, that though they be wounded, and gaſhed with neuer ſuch foule ſins, yet their Conſciences ſhrink not, feele not a whit. Their Conſciences are like Gally-ſlaues backs, ſo bebrawned ouer with often laſhing, that an ordinary

ry laſh will not make them ſo much as once ſhucke in their ſhoulders. You haue many that can ſweare, not onely your more ciuill oathes, of faith and troth, but thoſe ruffianly, and bloody oathes, of blood and wounds, and it neuer wounds their hearts a whit. You haue many that can commit foule ſins, with leſſe touch then others can heare of them. You ſhall haue black Smithes that are vſed to the frequent and daily handling of hot yron, hold an hot fire-coale in their hands, and laugh, whilſt another would roare out. There bee thoſe that can be drunk day after day, that conſecrate whole Sabbaths to *Venus* and *Bacchus*, and giue themſelues vp to foule villanies, and yet not one twitch at the heart, not a ſnib, not a croſſe word from their Conſciences. Eſtrich-like they can concoct yron, and put it off as eaſily as another weake ſtomacke can doe gelly. They haue brought their hearts to that paſſe the drunkards body is in, *Pro.* 25. 35. *They haue ſtricken me, and I was not ſicke, they haue*

haue beaten me and I felt it not. Their ſeared Conſciences haue no more feeling then our ſotted Drunkards haue in their drunkenneſſe, who though they haue many a knocke, and ſore bruiſe, yet feele it not. To this fearefull condition, and ſenſleſſe and ſeared ſtupidity of Conſcience many grow, & when they haue thus cruſted and brawned the ſame, then they haue their Conſciences at a good paſſe, becauſe they heare them not brawling within them. Alas how farre are ſuch from goodnes of Conſcience? In ſome ſenſe, thoſe haue worſe Conſciences then the Diuell himſelfe, who beleeues and trembles, whoſe Conſcience yet is not ſo ſeared, but it trembles at the thoughts of his deſerued damnation.

And howſoever theſe ſeared conſciences are quiet, yet there will come a day that this ſeared cruſtineſſe ſhall be ſcaled off, and thoſe conſciences which were not ſenſible of ſin, ſhall be moſt ſenſible of pain: though they were paſt feeling in the committing of ſinne, yet

they ſhall be all feeling in ſuffering puniſhment for ſinne. God will pare off that brawnineſſe from their conſciences, & will pare them ſo to the quicke, that they ſhall feele and moſt ſenſibly feele that which here they would not feele. Tremble therefore at the hauing of ſuch a conſcience, in which there is neyther vprightneſſe, nor peace; neither integritie, nor tranquilitie; but a ſenſleſſe & fearefull ſtupiditie. Thus we haue ſeene what a good Conſcience is.

Chap. IV.

Peace of Conſcience how gotten.

IT followes now to know how a man may get and keepe a good one, which is the third point which was propounded to bee handled. A point wel worth our enquiring after. A good Conſcience is the moſt precious thing that a Chriſtiã can haue: a thing of that eſteeme that where it is wãting, we account a man without a Conſcience. So of

of a man that hath an ill conſcience we vſe to ſay, he is a man of no cõſcience. Not that he hath no Conſcience, the Diuels themſelues haue a Conſcience, and happy it were for them they had none; but when a man hath not a good one, we eſteeme of him as hauing none at all. There is no greater good we can ſeek after then a good Conſcience. Let vs enquire then how we may get, and keepe this ſo great a good.

A good Conſcience then conſiſting in *Peace* and *Integrity*, theſe two being gotten and kept, we ſhal get and keep a good Conſcience.

Firſt then to make the Conſcience peaceably good, theſe things are required.

1. *Faith* in Chriſt, and his blood. The Conſcience cannot be at peace til it be purged from its guilt. An impure conſcience cannot but be an vnquiet conſcience, and euery guilty Conſcience is impure. Guilt is the ſame to the conſcience that the winds are to the ſeas, *Iſa.* 27.20,21. *The wicked are like the trou-*

bled Sea when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt vp mire and dirt, there is no peace to the wicked. Now that which makes the Sea ſo troubleſome and ragingly reſtleſſe, is the violence of the bluſtering winds that trouble and toſſe it to and fro. The winds are not ſo troubleſome to the ſea, as guilt is to the Conſcience. Therfore as the way to calme the Sea, is to calme the windes; ſo the way to quiet and calme the Conſcience, is to purge and take away the guilt. Guilt is in the Conſcience as *Ionas* in the Ship, out with him, and ſea and ſhip are both quiet. But how then ſhall the guilt bee purged out of the Conſcience? That we find *Heb.9.14. How much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt purge our cõſciences frõ dead workes?* We cannot haue a good conſcience till we be freed from an euill one. The way to be freed from an euill conſcience, is to haue *our hearts ſprinkled from an euill conſcience, Heb.10 22.* But what is that wherwith the conſcience muſt be ſprinkled to bee made good with peace & quietnes? the ſame which

which we finde 1 *Pet.*1.2. *The ſprinkling of the blood of Ieſus Chriſt*, and *Heb.* 12. 24. *The blood of ſprinkliug which ſpeakes better things then that of Abel.*

So then the Conſcience ſprinkled with Chriſts blood ceaſes to be euill, becomes good and peaceable. The ſame Chriſt that calmed the rage of the Sea by ſtilling the w.ndes, *Mar* 4. 39. *He aroſe and rebuked the wind, & ſaid vnto the Sea, Peace & be ſtill, & the wind ceaſed, and there was a great calme*; the ſame Chriſt it is that ſtills the rage of the conſcience, by taking and purging away the guilt therof, with the ſprinkling on of his blood. His blood *ſpeakes*, *Heb.*12.24. And ſpeakes not onely to God, but ſpeaks to the conſcience. The voyce which it ſpeakes, is *Peace and bee ſtill*, the ſame voice which to his Diſciples after his reſurrection, *Peace bee with you*; & then follows a great calme, and peace makes the conſcience good.

But here the conſcience will inquire how it may come to get this blood ſprinkled vpõ it, to make it thus peace-

ably good, and what is it that applies this calming blood of Chriſt? I anſwer therfore, That it is the grace of faith, therefore it was ſaid before, that faith in Chriſts blood makes peace in the cõſcience. Faith is the hand of the ſoule, and as the hyſſope ſprinkle, by which Chriſts blood is ſprinkled vpon our cõſciences, *Heb.* 10.22. *Let vs draw neer with a true heart, in full aſſurance of faith hauing our hearts ſprinkled from an euill conſcience.* And, *being iuſtified by faith we haue peace towards God, Rom.* 5.1. Hence that coniunction of faith and a good conſcience, 1 *Tim.* 1.5. *of a good conſcience, & of faith vnfained, &* v. 19. *Holding faith and a good conſcience.* For faith it is that makes a good cõſcience, by making a quiet conſcience. Faith is not onely a purifying grace, *Act.* 15.9. but it is alſo a pacifying grace, *Rom.* 5.1. It not only purges our corruptiõ, by applying the efficacy of Chriſts blood, but ſpecially purges out guilt by applying the merit of his blood. So that no faith, no peace; & no peace, no good con-

conſcience. A defiled Conſcience can be no good conſcience, and what defiles the conſcience? See *Tit.* 1. 15. *Vnto them that are defiled and vnbeleeuing, nothing is pure, but euen their minde and conſcience is defiled.* They that be defiled haue their conſciences defiled, but how come they and their Conſciences ſo? *To them that are defiled and vnbeleeuing.* Therefore an vnbeleeuing Conſcience is a defiled conſcience, & a defiled conſcience is no good cõſcience, becauſe it can haue no peace ſo long as it is clogged with defiling guilt. But contrarily, faith purifying not onely from corruption, but from guilt, by the applicatiõ of Chriſts blood makes the Conſcience pure and peaceable both.

There can be no *peace* of conſcience but where there is the *righteouſneſſe* of the perſon. There is no peace to the wicked. *Iſa.* 57. 21. as if he ſhould ſay. an euil vnrighteous perſon cãnot haue a good conſcience: where the perſon is euill, there the conſcience cannot bee good. Now faith in Chriſts blood

makes a mans person good, and so the cõscience becomes good. It makes the person *righteous*, and the person being *righteous*, the conscience is at *peace*, for *the worke of righteousnes, is peace, and the effect* of righteousnes, *quietnes and assurance for ever, Isa.* 32. 17. with which that of the Apostle sweetly suites, *Rom.* 7. 2. *First, King of* righteousnes, *and after that King of* peace. Our persõs must first find Christ a King of *righteousnesse* by iustifying them from their guilt, before our consciences can finde him King of *Salem*, pacifying them from their vnquietnes. Our persons once *iustified* by Christs blood frõ their guilt, and vnrighteousnes, our consciences are *pacified* and freed from their vnquietnesse.

Wouldst thou then haue a good conscience? Get the peace of Conscience. Wouldst thou haue Peace in thy conscience? Get faith in thy soule; Beleeue in the Lord Iesus, and get thy soule sprinkled with his blood, and then, *Heb.* 10. 2. Thou shalt haue no more con-

conſcience of ſin, thy conſcience ſhall be at quiet, no more accuſing thee, nor threatning thee condemnation for thy ſinne.

2. *Repentance* from dead workes. Though Chriſts blood bee that which purges the conſcience frō dead works, and ſo workes peace; yet that peace is not wrought in our apprehenſion, neither do we get the feeling of this fairly without ſome further thing. Therefore to our faith muſt be ioyned our repentance, though not in the making of our peace, yet for the feeling of it. Many are ready to catch at Chriſts blood, & if that will make a good conſcience they are then ſafe enough. But as thou muſt haue Chriſts blood, ſo Chriſt will haue thine heart alſo bleed by repentance, ere he will vouchſafe the ſenſe of peace. A conſcience, therefore that would be a conſcience hauing peace, muſt not onely be a *beleeuing*, but a *repenting* conſcience, *Mat.* 3. 2. *Repent ye, for the kingdome of heauen is at hand*, the kingdome of heauen ſhall be yours if you

you will repent, ye ſhall haue it immediately vpon your repentance. But wherein ſtands this kingdome offered to repentant cõſciences? *The kingdome of God ſtands in peace, and ioy in the holy Ghoſt, Rom.* 14. 17. *Repent, and ye ſhal receiue the gift of the holy Ghoſt, Act.* 3. 38. And what may that gift be. *The fruits of the Spirit are loue, ioy, peace, Gal.* 5. 22. Which though it be to be vnderſtood of peace between man & man, yet alſo that peace which is between God and man is the fruit of the Spirit, & *the loue of God ſhed abroad into our hearts by the holy Ghoſt, Ro.* 5. 5. is the gift of the holy Ghoſt, which he giues to all, that by repentance ſeeke to get a good conſcience. *Bleſſed are they that mourne*, that is, which repent, *for they ſhall be comforted, Mat.* 5. they ſhall haue the peace of a good Conſcience, which is the greateſt & ſweeteſt comfort in the world.

Many doe truſt all to their ſuppoſed faith, as a ſhort cut and a compendious way to a good cõſcience, but he whoſe faith doth not as well purifie the heart as

as pacifie it, hath neither faith, nor a good conſcience. It is Idle to hope for peace by faith whilſt thou liueſt impenitently in a ſinfull courſe. Thou canſt haue no peace of conſcience ſo long as thou haſt peace with thy ſinnes. Peace with Conſcience will be had by warre with ſin, in the dayly practiſe of repentance. It is but a dreame to thinke of a good Conſcience in peace, whileſt a man makes no Conſcience of ſin. They that haue a good cõſcience by Chriſts blood, may bee indeed ſaid to haue no Conſcience of ſinne, as *Heb.* 10. 2. But yet there is a great difference between *hauing* no Conſcience, and *making* no Conſcience of ſinne. To *haue* no conſcience of ſinne, is to haue a peaceable good conſcience, not accuſing of ſin, being ſprinkled with Chriſts blood. To *make* no Conſcience of ſin, is for a man impenitently to liue, & lye in any ſin. Now let any iudge whether theſe two can ſtand together, that a mã may liue as he liſt, and *make no Conſcience* of any ſinne, and yet haue ſuch peace by faith

faith as that he *hath no conſcience* of ſin. It is an vnconſcionable thing in this ſenſe to lay all vpon Chriſt, an vnconſcionable requeſt to haue him take away our guiltineſſe, and yet we would wallow in our filthineſs ſtill. How ſhal faith remoue the ſting, when repentance remoues not the ſinne?

Men ſeeking peace by faith in Chriſts blood, and yet liuing and lying in their ſinnes without repentance, God will giue them *Iehues* anſwere to *Iehoram*, 2 *King.* 9. 22. *What peace ſo long as the whoredomes of thy mother Iezebel, & her witchcrafts are ſo many?* So what peace of Conſcience ſo long as thine oathes, Sabbath-breaches, whoredomes, drunkennes, &c. do remaine, & remaine vnrepented of, and vnreformed. It is true of all ſinne, which is ſpoken of Romiſh Idolatry, *Apoc.* 14. 11. *They haue no reſt day nor night*; that is, no peace of Conſcience to any of that religion, ſo of al that liue in any ſinne, they haue no true reſt day or night; that is, *as Iſaiah* interprets it, There is no peace to the wicked

ked. Peace and wickedneſs liue not together vnder one roof. Wouldſt thou then haue a peaceable heart? Get an humbled, a mourning and a repentant heart for ſin. The leſſe peace with ſin, the more peace with GOD and our owne Conſciences.

3. The conſtant and conſcionable exerciſe of praier. An excellent means to helpe vs to the ſenſe of that peace which makes the conſcience good. He that hath a good Conſcience wil make Conſcience of prayer. And praier will helpe to make a good Conſcience better. *Phil.* 4. 7. *In euery thing by prayer and ſupplication with thankſgiuing, let your requeſts be made known vnto God,* & marke what ſhall be the fruit thereof, *And the peace of God that paſſes all vnderſtanding, ſhall keepe your hearts and mindes through Ieſus Chriſt.* See *Iob* 33. 26. *He ſhall pray vnto God, and he will bee fauourable vnto him, and he ſhall ſee his face with ioy.* It is many times with mens conſciences, as it was with *Saul*, he was vexed and diſquieted with an euill ſpirit, but

Dauids

Dauids Harpe gaue him eaſe. Praier is a *Dauids* Harpe, the muſicke whereof ſweetly calmes, & compoſes a diſtempered and diſquieted Conſcience, and puts it into frame againe. As in other diſquiets of the heart, after praier *Dauid* bids his ſoule *returne vnto her reſt*, *Pſal.* 116.4.7. So may we in theſe diſquiets of Conſcience doe no leſſe.

The way to get a good peaceable Conſcience, is to haue acquaintance with God; and when we haue acquaintance with him, then ſhall wee haue peace, *Iob.* 22.21. *Acquaint thy ſelfe now with him, and be at peace.* Now acquaintance is gotten with God by prayer. *Zech.* 13.9. *They ſhall call on my Name, and I will heare them; I will ſay, it is my people; and they ſhall ſay, the Lord is my God.* Loe how in prayer acquaintance is bred batweene God and his people, and acquaintance breeds loue, and peace; and peace a good Conſcience. Iudge then what pitious Conſciences they muſt needs haue, that make ſo little Conſcience of ſeeking God in this duty;

duty: of wicked ones the *Pſalm* ſpeaks, *They call not vpon God, Pſal.* 14. as much as *Iſaiah* ſayes, There is no peace to the wicked, they are vtterly voyd of good Conſcience.

CHAP. V.

Integritie of Conſcience how procured.

AND thus wee haue ſeene how the Conſcience may bee good for peace. It followes to conſider how it may become vprightly good, with the goodnes of Integritie. The goodneſſe of Integritie is gotten and kept by doing fiue things.

1. Walke and liue as *Paul* in this text, *Before God.* Set thy ſelfe euer in all thy wayes, as in the ſight and preſence of God, who is the Iudge & Lord of conſcience. Of *Moſes* it is ſaid, that he ſaw him *that was inuiſible. Heb.* 11. 27. Therfore it is that men walk with ſuch looſe and euill Conſciences, becauſe they thinke they walke inviſibly. And they thinke

thinke that God ſees not them, becauſe they ſee not God. An vpright Conſcience is a good conſcience, and this is the way to get and vpright one, *Gen.* 17 1. *Walke before me, and be vpright.* To haue God alwaies in our eye, wil make vs walke with vpright hearts. So *Pſal.* 119. 168. *I haue kept thy precepts, & thy teſtimonies,* that is in effect, I haue kept a good conſcience; but how came hee to doe it? *for all my waies are before thee.* Cõſcience as we ſaw before, is a knowledge together, that is, together with God. Now then this is an excellent meanes to get and keepe a good conſcience, to be carefull to doe nothing, but that which we would bee content God ſhould know as wel as our ſelues. Thinke with thy ſelfe before euery evill action; Am I content that God ſhould know of this? But how then may a man bring himſelfe to this? Set thy ſelfe alwayes in Gods preſence, & ſee the inviſible God, and ſee thy ſelfe viſible in his eye, and know that thou doeſt nothing which he takes not notice

tice of. This well thought vpon, and laid to heart, would make men make much conſcience of their wayes. The contrary to this is *raſh walking*, Leu. 26 when a man walkes ſo loofely, & heedleſly, as if there were no eye vpon him to view him in his actions.

2. Frame thy whole Courſe by the rule, and ſhape it by the direction of the word of God. Gods word is the Rule of Conſcience. *Gal. 6. 16. As many as walke according to this Rule.* Men muſt then walke by Rule, & the Word muſt be this Rule. *Pſal. 50. 23. To him that* orders *his conuerſation*, all Chriſtians muſt be regulars, and muſt liue orderly. But what is that Rule by which their Conuerſation muſt be ordered? That ſame, *Pſ. 119. 133. Order my ſteps in thy Word.* Hee that orders his courſe by that Rule, which is the rule of conſcience, ſhal be ſure to keepe and get a good cõſcience. He that will make good work will work by his rule, whereas he that works by gueſſe muſt needs make but ill worke. *Whatſoeuer is not of faith is ſin.*

Dirige greſſus ſecundũ verbum tuum. Quid eſt, Dirige ſecundum verbum tuum? Vt recti ſint greſſus mei, quia rectum eſt verbum tuum. Ego inquit, diſtorqueor ſub pondere iniquitatis, ſed verbum tuum eſt regula veritatis, me ergo diſtortum à me corrige tanquam ad regulam, hoc eſt, ad verbum tuum. Aug. de verb. apoſt. ſer. 12

Rom. 14. 23. That is, whatſoeuer a man doth, and hath not warrant for it out of, and from the rule of the Word, makes a mans conſcience in that particular to be euill. And therfore *v.* 5. *Let a man be fully perſwaded in his own mind.* How happy ſhould men be in getting and keeping good conſciences, if they would lay their lines and actions to the Rule. The want of this is it that makes men, men of ſo ill conſciences. Some liue by no Rule, ſome by falſe Rules; & hence comes mens conſciences to bee ſo Anomalous. Some liue by no Rule, but doe whatſoeuer ſeemes good in their owne eyes, goe as their luſts lead them, and follow his beck that rules in the Ayre. This is alſo to *walke raſhly*. Leu. 26. He that doth things without rule, goes raſhly to worke. Hee that walkes irregularly, walks raſhly, & no maruel if men haue crooked wayes, & crooked conſciences, when they will not liue by Rule. Some againe liue by falſe rules, and that not onely Popiſh fictitious Regulars that liue by ſuper-

ſtitious

ſtitious Rules of their *Dominick, Francis, &c.* But among ſt our ſelues many haue a Rule they doe liue by; but that rule is not the Word, but ſome falſe Rules of their owne deuiſing. Such as are theſe; Great mens practiſe, or ſome learned mans opinion, the cuſtome of times and places wherein they liue, the example of the multitude, or ſome ſecret blind and ſelfe-conceited principles, which they keep to themſelues, and by which they liue. All which being crooked Rules, muſt needes make crooked Conſciences, whereas if men would liue by *Dauids* rule, *Pſal.* 119. 105. *Thy word is a lampe vnto my feet & a light vnto my path*, & in euery action would haue an eye, & a *reſpect vnto the Commandements*, as he had *Pſal.* 119. 6. then ſhould they *make ſtreight paths for their feet* Heb. 12. 13. & keepe vpright conſciences in euery ſpirituall action; therefore haue an eye to the Word, queſtion it whether it be lawfull & warrantable by the Word or no, and meddle no further then it hath authorize

Inter cauſas malorũ noſtrorum eſt, quod viuimus ad exempla, nec ratione componimur, ſed conſuetudine abducimur. Quod ſi pauci facerent nollemus imitari, cum plures facere cæperunt, quaſi honeſtius ſit, quia frequentius, ſequimur, & rectum apud nos locũ tenet error, vbi publicus factus eſt, Sen. ep 124

rize, and beare thee out. If this courſe were taken, ſuch a good courſe would make and keepe a good Conſcience. And why ſhould not men be willing to take this courſe? why will we not make that Word our Rule, which muſt bee made our Iudge? *The word which I ſpeake ſhall iudge you in the laſt day.* Iohn. 12.48. The Word ſhall iudge our conſciences, therefore let it rule, and order them. And if it haue the ruling of our conſciences, it will make them good conſciences, and when they are good, they needo not feare what Iudge they come before, nor what Iudgment they vndergoe. In ſumme, if we would haue good conſciences, we muſt make more conſcience then is commonly made of reading, and ſearching the Scriptures. The ignorance and neglect of this duty is it which banes ſo many conſciences in the world.

3. Keep a daily and a frequent Audit with thy conſcience, often examinatiō of the conſcience conduces much to the goodnes of it. The Prophet com-

plains

plaines of his people, *Euery one turned to his Courſe, as the horſe ruſheth into the battel. Ier.* 8.6. Here were men far from a good Conſcience; but what was the reaſon of it? He giues it in the former words, *No man repented him of his wickednes, ſaying, what haue I done?* There was no examination of their Conſciences and Courſes, what they were, nor how they were, and from hence comes this miſchiefe. This was *Dauids* courſe. *Pſa.* 119.51. *I conſidered my wayes and turned my feet vnto thy teſtimonies.* When a mans feet are in the wayes of Gods teſtimonies, then he walkes with an vpright Conſcience: and marke how *Dauid* came to doe ſo, *I conſidered my wayes*, he vſed to examine his Conſcience.

Integritatis tuæ curioſus explorator viam tuam in quotidiana diſcuſſione examina. Attende diligenter quantum proficias, vel quantũ deficias, qualis ſis in moribus, qualis ſis in affectibus, quã ſimilis ſis Deo, vel quam diſſimilis, quam prope, vel quam longe, &c. Redde crebro te tibi, & ſi non ſemper vel ſæpe, & ſaltem interdũ Bern. med. de vot. c. 5.

The firſt ſtep to get a good conſcience, is for a man to know that his cõſcience before reformatiõ is evill. How ſhall that be knowne without a ſearch? When a ſearch hath diſcouered what it is that makes the cõſcience, & courſe euill, then will Conſcience be ready to

labor a man to the reformation of that which is amiſſe, and will not ceaſe to vrge, and ply a man till it be done. Frequent examination as it helps to the making of ſcholers, ſo to the making of Conſciences good. Hence mens lying in ſo groſſe neglects of good duties, in ſo many great euills, becauſe men and their Conſciences neuer reckon. Men take not themſelues aſide into their cloſets and chambers, & there ſet not vp a priuy ſeſſions to make inquirie into their owne hearts & waies, and therefore are their wayes & Conſciences ſo much out of order. Many a man thinkes his eſtate in the world to be very good, and thinkes hee growes rich and wealthy, when his eſtate indeede is weake, and growes euery day worſe then other. Now what is it that cauſes ſo great a miſtake? Nothing but this, that he neuer looks ouer his books nor caſts ouer his reckonings. If he had done this, he ſhould haue ſeen that his eſtate was not anſwerable to his conceit, and the knowledge of his miſconceit

ceit would haue made him haue liued at a more wary, and thrifty rate, and haue kept himſelfe within ſuch a compaſſe as might haue kept vp his eſtate, whereas now the not examining his bookes, puts him into a conceit of wealth, and this conceit beggers and vndoes him. It fares no better with too many in their Conſciences. *Loadicea* thought well of her ſelfe, *Thou ſayeſt I am rich.* If ſhe had examined her conſcience, ſhee ſhould haue ſeene that which Chriſt ſaw, that ſhe was poore, blind, naked, and miſerable, and the ſight of this would haue made her to haue ſought after that counſell which Chriſt there giues her. *Reuel.* 3. Men would haue farre better conſciences if they knew in what ill caſe their conſciences ſtand, and examination would helpe them to the knowledge of this. If men would but ouer-look the book of their cconſcience, and ſee how many omiſſions of good, how many ſinfull commiſſions ſtand regiſtred there, it would both make them maruellous

ſollicitous how to get thē wiped out, and wondrous warie how any more ſuch Items came there. Often reckonings would blot out, and keep off the ſcore. Here is then wiſdome for ſuch as deſire to keepe good Conſciences. Doe with the workes of thy conuerſation as God did with the works of his Creation. He not onely ſurueighed at the ſixt dayes end the whole worke of the weeke, but at each daies end made a particular ſurueigh thereof. Do thou ſo, not onely at the weekes end, at thy liues end, ſearch thine heart, and examine thy courſe, but at euery daies end looke backe into the day paſt, and examine what thy cariage and behauiour hath beene. This being done, a man ſhal find his works either good or euil. If good, how ſhal his conſcience cheer him with its peace? If euill, then if conſcience haue any life, or breath in it, it wil make a man fall to humiliation, & to a godly reſolution of watching ouer his wayes for the future, ſo ſhall Conſcience be much holpen for integrity.

Omni die cum vadis cubitum, examina diligenter quid cogitaſti, & quid dixiſti in die, & quomodo v. tile tempus & ſpatium quod datum eſt ad æquirendum vitam æternā diſpenſaſti. Et ſi bene tranſiuiſti, lauda De-

Dauids

Dauids counſell is good, *Pſ.*4.4. *Examine your hearts vpon your beds*; and his reſolution is alſo good, verſ.8. of the ſame Pſalme, *I will lay me down and ſleep in peace.* Who would not be glad ſo to ſleepe, & to take his reſt ſo? would we ſleepe vpon *Dauids* pillow, ſleepe in peace? then hearken wee to *Dauids* counſell, to *examine* our ſelues *vpon our beds.* There is nothing makes a mans bed ſo ſoft, nor his ſleepe ſo ſweet as a good cõſcience. It is with Sins as with Cares, both trouble a mans ſleep, both are troubleſome bed-fellowes; as they therfore ſleep ſweetly that leaue their cares in their ſhoos, ſo they ſleep with moſt peace that let not ſinne lye down to ſleepe with them, who are ſo farre from lying downe in their ſinnes, that by their goodwill, will not let the Sun goe downe vpon their ſin, but by examination ferret out the ſame. This being done, it may be ſaid as *Prou.* 3.24. *Thou ſhalt lye downe, and thy ſleep ſhall be ſweete.* Nay further, examine thy conſcience vpon thy bed, and thou ſhalt not

um: ſi malè vel negligenter, lugeas, & ſequenti die non differas confiteri. Si aliquid cogitaſti, dixiſti, vel feciſti quod tuam conſcitiam multum vexare deat, non comedas antequam confitearis. Ber. form. vit. honeſt. *Suauius dormiunt qui relinquunt curas in calceis.*

not onely ſleep in peace, but thou ſhalt awake & ariſe the next morning with an vpright frame of heart, diſpoſed to the more caution againſt ſin the day following. So much *Dauid* ſeemes to intimate in that forenamed place. *Tremble and ſinne not*. That is, be afraid to ſin, take heed ye ſinne no more. But what courſe may one take to come to that integrity of conſcience, as to feare to ſin? Take this courſe, *Examine your hearts vpon your beds*.

But alas how rare a practiſe is this, & therfore are good conſciences ſo rare. Many thinke this an heauy burden, and a ſore taske, and count the remedy a great deale worſe then the diſeaſe, there is nothing they tremble at more then a domeſticall Audit, and this reckoning with their cõſciences. They ſay of conſcience as *Ahab* of *Micaiah*, and care as little to meddle with cõſcience as *Ahab* with *Micaiah*. *I hate him for hee neuer ſpeakes good to me*. 1 King. 22. So they thinke the conſcience will deale with them. They know their conſci-

ence

ence wil ſpeak as *Iob* ſayes God wrote, *Thou writeſt bitter things againſt me.* Conſcience hath ſuch a ſtinging waſpiſh tongue, that by no means they dare endure a parley with it. It is with many and their conſciences, as with men that haue ſhrewiſh wiues. Many a man when he is abroad, hath no ioy at all to come home, nay, hee is very loath to come within his owne doores, he fears hee ſhall haue ſuch a peale rung him, that he had rather be on the houſe top, as *Salomon* ſpeakes, or in ſome outhouſe, and lodg as our Sauiour at *Bethlem* in a cratch, or a Manger, then come within the noyſe of her clamorous, and clattering tongue. So many think conſcience hath ſuch a terrible ſhrewiſh tongue, that if they ſhall but come within the ſound thereof, they ſhall be caſt into ſuch melancholly dumpes, as they ſhall not be able in haſt to clawe off againe. How much, and how ſeriouſly are they to be pittied that to preuent a few houres, or dayes ſuppoſed ſorrow, and ſadneſſe, by which they might

might come to procure both peace & integritie of conſcience, will adventure the rack and eternall torture of conſcience in Hell. Remember that there is no melancholly to the melancholly of Hell.

Chap. VI.

Two further meanes to procure Integritie of Conſcience.

IN the fourth place, deale with thy Conſcience as God would haue *Abraham* doe by *Sarah*, *Gen.* 21.12. *In all that Sarah ſhall ſay vnto thee hearken vnto her voice.* So here. If we would get & keepe a good Conſcience, in all that it ſhal ſay vnto vs being enlightened and directed by the word, hearken vnto it. Conſcience being enlightened hath a voyce, and no man but ſometime or other ſhall heare this voice of conſciẽce. conſcience is Gods Monitor to ſpeake to men when others cãnot, or dare not ſpeake. Sometimes men cannot ſpeake as

as not being privy to other mens neceſſities & failings. Sometimes they may not be ſuffered to ſpeake, as *Ahab* will not endure *Micaiah* to ſpeake to him. Sometime if a man ſpeak, he may haue rough and angry anſwers, as the Prophet had from *Amaziah*. 2. *Chro*. 25. 16. *Art thou made of the Kings Counſell? forbeare, why ſhouldeſt thou be ſmitten?* God hath therfore provided every man, even great men which may not bee ſpoken to, he hath provided them a boſom Chaplein, that will round them in the eare, and will talke roundly to them, one that will be of their counſell in deſpight of them, one that feares no fiſts, dreads no ſmiting, yea, one that feares not to ſmite the greateſt, 2 *Sam* 24. 10 *And Dauids heart ſmote him after that he had numbred the people.* It may bee many there were about *Dauid* that had not the hearts to ſmite *Dauid* with a graue reproſe, though he giues leaue to the righteous to doe ſo. *Pſal*. 141. *Let the righteous ſmite me*, but yet whileſt others, it may be, are fearefull and timorous

morous to doe him that good office, conſcience is at no demurre vpon the poynt, that feares not, but ſmites *Dauid* for ſinne.

Gods Miniſters are oft ſlighted, and light ſet by, Preachers cannot be regarded, but God hath giuen men a Preacher in their own boſome, & this Preacher wil make many a curtaine ſermon, will take men to task vpon their pillow, and will bee preaching ouer our Sermons againe to them. And though many will not be brought to repetitions of Sermons in their Families, yet they haue a Repeater in their boſome, that will be at priuate repetitions with them in ſpite of them, & will tel them, This is not according to that you haue bin taught, you haue bin taught otherwiſe; you haue bin reproued for, and conuinced of this ſinne in the publike Miniſterie, &c. Why do you not hearken & reforme? Thus then conſcience hauing a voice, and doing the office of a Preacher vnto vs, if wee would haue conſcience good, then in all things that con-

Conſcience enlightened ſhall ſay vnto vs, hearken vnto it. More diſtinctly Conſcience hath a two-fold voyce.

1. A voyce of direction, telling vs what is good or euill, what is lawful & vnlawfull, *Iſa*, 30. 21. *And thine eares ſhall heare a word behind thee, ſaying, This is the way, walke ye in it.* That is vnderſtood of the voice of Gods ſpirit in the ſecret ſuggeſtions therof, & ſuch is the voice alſo of conſcience within vs, dictating to vs, and directing vs what duties are to be done, what courſes to be auoyded. How many times doth conſcience preſſe vs to repentance and to reforme our wayes? how often doth it call vpon vs to ſettle to ſuch & ſuch good courſes? and ſo with Dauid, *Pſal.* 116. 7. *Our raines doe teach it in the night ſeaſon.*

Ita enim deſuper in ſilentio ſonat quidam non auribus ſed mentibus. Auguſt. in Pſal. 42.

2. A voyce of correction and admonition, checking and chiding, taking vp & ſnibbing vs when we doo amiſſe. So *Pſal.* 42. 5, 11. and *Pſ.* 43. 5. *Why art thou caſt downe O my ſoule, and why art thou diſquieted within me?* And ſo it is

10.

10. whilſt in the foregoing verſes hee was complaining, and vſing ſome ſpeeches that might ſauour of ſome diffidence, ſee how conſcience doth her office by a correcting voyce: *And I ſaid, This is my infirmitie*; as if he had ſaid, whilſt I was vſing ſuch diffident expoſtulations, mine owne conſcience told me, I did not doe well. Conſcience ſo ſpeakes to vs, as the Lord to *Ionah*, *Ion.* 4.4, 9. *Doeſt thou well to bee angry?* So ſaies conſcience oft, Doeſt thou well to be thus earthly, thus eager vpon the world, thus negligent and formall in holy duties? thus conſcience giues her priuy nips, and her ſecret checks. This is that of which *Iob* ſpeakes, *Iob* 27.6. *My heart ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I liue*. Implying that conſcience after ſin hath a reproaching voice, as when it beſooles a man, as Foole that thou art to doe this, to loſe thy peace with God for a baſe ſinfull pleaſure. Thus *Dauids* conſcience reproached him, 2 *Sam.* 24. 10. *I haue done very foolishly*, yea, *Pſ.* 37. 22 it puts the foole and the beaſt both

vpon

vpon him, *So foolish was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee.* This is the smiting of the conscience, 2 *Sam.* 24, 10 Conscience first points with the finger, and giues direction, if that be neglected, it smites with the fist, and giues correction.

Now then that which I ayme at is this, If we would get and keepe a good conscience, then neglect not, nor despise Conscience when it speaketh. Doth thy Conscience presse thee to any workes of pietie, to the care of family-worship, and priuate deuotion, to the reading of the Scriptures, sanctification of the Sabbath, &c. In any case be so wise as to hearken to the counsels, to the vrgings, and to the iniunctions which come vp of the Court of Conscience. Hearken in any case to this Preacher, whom thou canst not suspect of partiality, malice, ill will, as thou doest others, thereby giving way to Satans policie, that thereby stops vp the passages of thine heart, that the Word may not enter. Here can bee no such

suspitious, Conscience cannot be suspected to be set on by others, though *Ieremy* be charged to be set on by *Baruch*, *Ier.* 43. 3. Therefore hearken to the voyce of this Preacher, and this will helpe thee to a good Conscience.

Againe, doth thy conscience rebuke thee, doth it chide and check thee, doth thy *heart reproch thee for thy wayes*? Doth it say, doest thou well to liue in such and such sinnes? Doth it punctually reproue thee for thine euils? Doe not answer Conscience, as *Ionas* answered God, frowardly, *Yea I doe well*, but euen so with Conscience, & doe thou accuse thy self as fast as it accuses, acknowledge thy folly, yeeld, promise, and couenant with thy conscience a present and speedy reformation. This if it were done, how happy should men be in getting and keeping a good Conscience.

Ideo quantum potes, teipsum coargue, inquire in te accusatoris primũ partibus fungere, deinde Iudicijs novissime deprecatoris: aliquando offende te. Senec. epist. 28.

But alas, how few regard the voyce of Conscience, and one heareken to it, and the very want of this duetie is it which breeds so much ill conscience in the

the world. Men in this case are guilty of a double wickednesse. Either they deale as the Iewes with the Apostles, *Act.* 4. 18. & 1 *Thes.* 2. 16. They either *stop Conscience mouth*, and labour to silence this Pratchet, or else they deale with Conscience as the Iewes did with *Stephen*, *Act.* 7. 57. *They stopped their eares.* If they cannot stop Conscience mouth, they will at least stop their owne eares.

They labour to stoppe Consciences mouth. If Conscience beginne to take them aside, and to say to them, as *Ithiel* to *Ahiam*, *Judge us, &c. Have we inherited your wives?* they answer, but in another sense, as he did, *Keepe silence.* If Conscience offer to be talking to them, they shuffle it off as *Felix* did *Paul*, they are not at leasure, they will finde some other time when their leasure will better serue. Yea many when their conscience reproaches them, they againe reproach and reproue it, and answer it as the *Danites* did *Micah*, *Judges* 18. 23.

What ayleth thee? and are ready to giue reproachfull language to their owne conscience, that it cannot be quiet and let them alone.

2. But yet conscience will not oftentimes be thus posted and shuffled off, will not be gagged, or suffer her lips to be sown vp, but will deal with a man as the woman of Canaan did with our Sauiour, *Matth.* 15. She would not be put off with neglect, or crosse answers, but she still presses vpon our Sauiour, and growes so much the more importunate. So oftentimes conscience when she sees men shuffle, growes the more importunate, and will dog and haunt men so much the more. Yea it deals like the blind men, *Matth* 20. 31. who when the multitude rebuked them, *they cryed the more.* Now then when Conscience growes thus clamorous, and will not bee silenced, then they will stop their owne eares, that if it will needs be prating, it shall but tell a tale to a deafe man. To this end men put a double tricke vpon their Consciences.

1. *Sauls*

1. *Sauls tricke, Saul* is vexed with an euill spirit, what must bee the cure? seeke him out a minstrell. Thus many when the cry of conscience is vp, betake them to their merrimēts & iollities. They try whether the noise of the Harps, and Viols, and the roarings of good fellowes will not drowne the voyce and noise of conscience. They will trie whether the dinne of an Alehouse, or the ratling and clattering of the Dice and Tables cannot deafe their eares against the clamours of Conscience. Thus do many in the accusations of Conscience, giue themselues wholy vp to all manner of pleasures and delights, that so their minds being taken vp with them, there might bee no leasure to giue conscience any the least audience.

2. *Cains tricke. Cain* had a marke of God vpon him, *Gen* 4.15. And what might that marke be? *Chrysostom* thinks it was a continuall shaking and trembling of his body. If that were his marke, why might not that trembling

Chrys in 1 ep. Cor. Hom 7.

come from the horrour of his guiltie conscience, following him with a continuall hue and cry for murther, & reproching him for a bloody murtherer. How-euer, no question but his conscience continually haunted him, and the cry of blood was euer in his eares. Now then what course takes he? ye shall see Gen. 4. 17. that hee falls a building of Cities, betakes himself to a multitude of imployments, that the noyse of the hawes, axes, and mallets, might be lowder then the noise of his conscience. If Conscience bee out of quiet with them, and will not cease to vrge and pinch them, then haue among their sheep, & oxen, that their bleating, and bellowing may keepe vnder the voice of conscience, they do so possesse their heads and their thoughts, and so ouerload them with much dealings in the world, that there is no spare time wherein their eare can be free to heare the voice of conscience. The clutter of their many businesses make too great a noyse for Conscience to haue audience.

ence. They deal with their conſciences as the *Epheſians* dealt with *Alexander*, *Act.* 19. 33. 34. *And Alexander beckned with the hand, and would haue made his defence vnto the people. But when they knew that he was a Iew, all with one voice about the ſpace of two houres cryed out, Great is Diana of the Epheſians.* If *Alexander* had had neuer ſo good lungs, & ſtrong ſides, hee might haue ſtrained his voice till he had crazed the organs of language, & might haue ſpoken till he had beene hoarſe againe, before he could haue been heard to haue ſpoken one ſyllable, though he had ſpoken all the reaſon in the world. Such a noiſe of an outragious bellowing multitude had bin almoſt enough to haue drowned the voice of a Canon. Thus deale men with their Conſcience, if ſhe but prepare to ſpeake and giue but a becke with the hand, preſently thruſt themſelues into a crowd of buſineſſe that may out-cry and ouer-cry the bawling noiſe thereof. It was an hideous noiſe that the ſhriking infants of Iſrael made

when they were offered vp aliue in fire vnto *Moloch*. Now leſt their parents bowels ſhould earne with compaſſion, & be affected with the ſhrikes of their poore babes, therefore they had their Drummes and Trumpets ſtrucke vp, and ſounded in the time of ſacrifice, to make ſuch a noiſe, that in no caſe the lamentable cryes of the infants ſhould be heard. The ſame trick doe too many put vpon their conſciences, if they will be clamoring, they will haue ſome Drum or other, whoſe greater noiſe may deafe their eares from hearing the cryes of Conſcience.

But alas what poore Proiects are theſe? The time will come when men ſhal haue neither pleaſures nor profits, neither delights nor buſineſſe, to ſtop their eares. Though now men beat vpon theſe Drumme-heads, and with the noiſe of their pleaſures & profits, keep Conſcience voyce vnder from being heard: Yet the day will come, when God will beat out theſe Drum-heads, and then the cries, & horrid & hideous

ſhreikes

ſhreikes of Conſcience ſhall be heard: God will one day ſtrip thee of all thy pleaſures and imployments, and will turne thee ſingle and looſe to thy conſcience, and it ſhall haue full liberty to bait thee, and bite thee at pleaſure. Oh how much better is it to be willing to hearken to the voice of Conſcience here, then to bee forced to heare it in hell, when the time of hearkning will be paſt and gone. Hearken to it now, and thou ſhalt not heare it hereafter. Hearken to the admonitions and reproofes of it now, and thus ſhalt thou get Integrity here, and ſhalt bee free from hearing the dolefull clamours of it in hell hereafter.

5. To get and keep a good Conſcience euer in caſes of a doubtfull and queſtionable nature, be ſure to take the ſureſt ſide. Many things are of a queſtionable nature, and much may bee ſaid on either ſide; in ſuch caſes, if thou wouldſt haue a good Conſcience, take the ſureſt ſide; that ſide on which thou mayſt be ſure thou ſhalt not ſinne. As for

for example. There be diuerse games and recreations whose lawfulnesse are questioned, yet much may be said for them, and possibly they may haue the iudgement of diuerse reuerend & learned men for their lawfulnesse. Now what shall a man doe in this case? Take the sure side. If I vse them it is possible I may sinne, it may be they are not sinfull, yet I am not so sure of it that I shal not sin if I vse them, as I am sure I shall not sinne if I doe not vse them. I am sure that not to vse such sports breakes none of Gods commandements, a man may be bold to build vpon that. Hee that liues by this rule, shall keepe his Conscience from many a flaw. Hee that sayles amongst rockes it is possible he may escape splitting, but he is not so sure to keepe his vessell safe and whole, as he that sayles in a cleare sea where no rocks are at all. It is good in matter of life and practise, to doe as *Augustine* speakes in case of doctrine. *We liue more safely*, saith he, *if we attribute all wholly to God, and do not commit our selues part-*

Tutiores igitur viuimus si totum Deo damus, Non autem nos illi ex parte, & nobis ex parte committimus. Aug. de dono persev. cap. 6.

ly

ly to God, and partly to our selues. In doctrines it is good to hold the safest side, wherein there can be no danger, yea, *Bellarmine* himselfe after his long dispute for iustification by merit, comes to this at last, *That by reason of the vncertainty of our owne righteousnesse, and the danger of vaine-glory, it is the most safe way to repose our whole confidence in the mercy and goodnes of God alone.* Which way soeuer *Bellarmine* is gone himself, or any of his religion, I think common reason will teach a man so much wisedome to goe the *safest* way to heauen, and that the *safest* way is the best way. The Lord that would haue vs make our *calling and election sure*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. would not haue vs put so great a matter as the saluation of our soules vpon *Bellarmines* hazard, & confessed *vncertainties* of our owne righteousnes. Now as in case of doctrine, so in case of practise it is great wisedome, and a great meanes of keeping a good Conscience, to do that wherin we may *Tutiores viuere*, and to take to that which

Propter incertitudinem propriæ Iustitiæ & periculum inanis gloriæ, tutissimum est fiduciam totam in sola Dei misericordia & benignitate reponere. Bellar. de Iustific. lib. 5. cap. 7.

Tutis-

Tutissimum est, to follow that which is safest, and to take to that side which is the surest, and the freest from danger.

Chap. VII.

Two markes of a good Conscience.

THus wee see how a good Conscience may be had; it followes wee consider how it may be knowne, and be discerned to be had. The markes and notes by which a good Conscience may be knowne, are *seuen*.

1. Note of good conscience. Conscience in all things.

1. This in the text. In *all* good conscience. It is a good note of a good conscience, when a man makes conscience of all things, all duties and al sins. There bee that haue naturall Consciences principled by some generall grounds of nature, and it may be so farre as these rules carry them may make some Conscience, but their principles comming short, they must needs also come as short of a good Conscience: *I haue liued*, saies *Paul* here, *in all*

good

good Conscience, and *Heb.* 13. 18. *We trust we haue a good Conscience in all things.* It is a good Conscience when a mans life, all his life is a life of Conscience, when in all his life, and the whole tenour thereof he makes Conscience of all that God commands, and forbids; *Psalme* 119. 6. *Then shall I not be ashamed*, (what breeds shame but euill conscience?) *when I haue respect vnto all thy Commandements.* When all are respected there is no shame, because where all are respected there is good Conscience, and where good Conscience is, there is no shame. That argued *Dauids* good Conscience, *Psal.* 119. 101. *I haue refrained my feet from euery euill way.*

Try mens consciences by this, and it will discouer a great deale of euill Conscience in the world. Many a moral man makes Conscience of doing his neighbour the least wrong, he will not wrong or pinch any man, prayes euery man his owne, deales fairly, and squarely in his commerce, there is no

man

man can say black is his eye, you shall haue him thanke God that hee hath as good a Conscience as the best. These are good things, and such things as men ought to make Conscience of, but yet here is not enough to make a good Conscience. A good Conscience must be *all* good Conscience, or it is not good Conscience. Now indeed these men may haue good Consciences *before men*, but my Text tells vs that we must liue in *all* good Conscience *before God*. And *Paul* ioynes them two together, *Act. 24. And herein I doe exercise my selfe to haue an easie Conscience voyd of offence towards God, and towards men.* Now bee it that these haue good Conscience before men, yet what haue they before God? Alas they are miserably ignorant in the things of God, no cōsciences to acquaint themselues with his truth, no conscience of prayer in their families, of reading the Scriptures, no Conscience of an oath, and as little of the Sabbath, and the priuate duties thereof. How farre are

theft from good conscience.

Others againe seem to make conscience of their duties before God, but in the meane time no Conscience of duties of Iustice in the second Table, make no conscience of oppression, racking rents, couetousnesse, ouer-reaching, &c. these are no better conscienced then the former, neither are good because they liue not in *all good* conscience. Thus may a man discouer the haughty Consciences of most *Iehu*'s seruice, would haue zealous for the Lord, and seemes to be a man hauing good conscience in the demolishing the Temple of *Baal*, and putting to death his Priests, but if *Iehu* make Conscience of letting *Baal*'s Temple stand, why doth he not as well make Conscience of letting *Ieroboams* Calues stand. If *Iehu* had had a good conscience, he would as ill haue brooke *Ieroboams* as *Baals* Idolatry, he would haue purged the Land of *all* Idols. *Herod* seemes to make some Conscience of an oath. *Marke* 6.26. *For his*

oathes sake he would not reiect her. It is ioy of him that he is a man of so good Conscience. I, but in the meane time why makes he no Conscience of incest and murther? Hee scares and makes Conscience to breake an vnlawfull oath, but makes no Conscience to cut an holy Prophets throat. Who would not haue thought *Saul* to haue beene a man of a very good Conscience? see how like a man of good Conscience he speakes. 1 *Sam.* 14. 34. *Sinne not against the Lord in eating with the blood.* Hee would haue the people make Conscience of eating with the blood, and indeed it was a thing to be made Conscience of. I, but hee that makes conscience of eating the flesh of Sheepe and Oxen with the blood, like a bloody-hearted tyrant as he was, he makes no conscience of sucking, and shedding the blood of fourescore and fiue of Gods Priests. Iust the conscience of his blood-hound *Doeg*, 1 *Sam.* 21. 7. *Doeg was there that day deteyned before the Lord.* How deteyned? either on

of

of a religious Conscience of the Sabbaths, or by occasion of a vow, the man made conscience of going before the Sabbath were ended, or the dayes of his vow finisht. A thing indeed to be made conscience of, men ought not to depart from Gods house till holy seruices be finisht, a duty that euen the Prince must make conscience of, *Ezek.* 46. 10. Who therefore would not iudge this *Edomite* a conscionable *Proselyte*. I, but why then makes hee not conscience of lying? *Psal.* 25. Why no conscience of being instrumentall to *Sauls* iniustice in that barbarous villany of slaying not onely innocent men, but innocent Priests of the Lord? such were the Consciences of the chiefe Priests, *Math*, 27. 6. How like honest conscionable men they speake! *It is not lawfull for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.* Sure it is great cõscience ought to be made of bringing the price of blood into the Teple treasury; Are they not then men of good Conscience, *It is not law-*

full, ye ſee they will not do that which is not lawfull. It is well, but tell me, is it not lawful to take the price of blood, and is it lawfull to giue a price for blood? Ought there not a Conſcience to be made of blood, as well as of the price of blood? They make a Conſcience of receiuing the price of blood into the treaſury, but make no Conſcience of receiuing the guilt of blood into their conſciences. Iuſt ſuch Conſciences as they had, *Ioh.* 18. 28. *They would not goe into the iudgement Hall leſt they ſhould be defiled, but that they might eate the Paſſouer.* Indeed a man ſhould make great Conſcience of preparation to the Sacrament, and take great heed that he come not thither defiled; but ſee their naughty Conſcience, they make Conſcience of being defiled by going into the Iudgement hall, but make no Conſcience of being defiled with the blood of an Innocent. Such was the conſcience of the Iewes, *Ioh.* 19. 31. they make Conſcience of the body of Chriſt hanging vpon the Croſſe

Qualis hæc innocentiæ ſimulatio? pecuniam ſanguinis non mittere in Arcam & ipſum ſanguinem mittere in Conſcientiam. Auguſt.

Crosse on the Sabbath, but with what Conscience haue they hanged it on the Crosse at all? This was iust like to those that *Socrates* speakes of, who made great conscience of keeping holy dayes, yet made no conscience of vncleanesse, that was but an indifferent thing with them. As if Conscience were not rather to bee made of keeping our vessels in holinesse, our bodies, then dayes holy? Remarkeable in this kinde is that dealing of the *Iewes* with *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 11.24. *Of the Iewes fiuetimes receiued I forty stripes saue one.* If we looke into the Law, *Deut.* 25.1.2.3. it runs thus, *If there bee a controuersie, &c. and it shall be if the wicked man be worthy to bee beaten, the Iudge shall cause him to lye downe, and to bebeaten before his face according to his fault by a certaine number, forty stripes hee may giue him and not exceed.* Now see the good consciences of these *Iewes*, they might giue forty stripes, but not beyond that number might they goe. Now they make so much conscience

of exceeding the number of forty; that they giue *Paul* but nine and thirty. Thus they make Conscience of the number, but no conscience of the fact. They make conscience of giuing aboue fortie, but with what Conscience doe they giue him any at all? The text not onely prescribes the number of stripes, but the condition of the person, namely, that he be *worthy to be beaten*, and he must be punished *according to his fault*. Now see these men make Conscience of the law for the number, but make no Conscience of the law, that will haue only wicked men, and such as are worthy to be beaten, to bee so vsed. These be the good consciences of wicked men, they make seeme of making conscience in some one thing, but make no Conscience of ten others, it may be of farre greater weight, and necessity, and herein discouer they the naughtinesse of their consciences. The conscience therfore is not to be iudged good for one, or some good actions. *Ioab* turned not after *Absolom*, but hee turned

after *Adoniah*. 1 *King*. 1. 28. Whereas a good conscience that turnes neither to the right hand nor the left, would haue turned neither after *Adoniah* nor *Absolom*. A good conscience and a good conversation must goe together. 1 *Pet*. 3. 16. *Having a good conscience that they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation*. One good action makes not a good conversation, nor a good Conscience, but then a mans conversation many be said to be good, when in his whole course he is carefull to doe all good duties, and to avoyd all sins, and such a good conversation is a signe of a good Conscience.

To do some good things, & not all, is no more a signe of good Conscience, then to doe some things onely which his master requires, and to neglect other some, is no signe of a good seruant. A good seruants commendation is to doe all his Masters business he enioynes him. We would hold him but an holy-day servant, and an idle companion, that when his master hath set

Nunc autem in hoc maior offensa est quod partem sententiæ sacræ pro commodorum nostrorum vtilitate deligimus, partem prodei iniuria

him his seuerall workes to doe, he will doe which him pleases, and leaue the other vndone. This were not to doe his masters, but to doe his owne will, and to serue his own turne rather then his masters: So for a man to make choyce of duties, and to picke out some particulars, wherein hee will yeeld obedience to God, and to passe by others as not standing with his profits, pleasures, and lusts, this will neuer gaine a man the commendation of a good Conscience, whose goodnesse must be knowne by making conscience of *all* things. Then haue Gods seruants good Consciences, when it can be said of them as *Shaphan* speakes of *Iosiah* his seruants. 2 *Chron.* 34. 16. *All that was committed to thy seruants, they doe it.*

2. To make conscience of small Duties, and small sinnes. This also rises out of the text. *All good Conscience.* If of *all* things, then of *small* things. It might haue beene comprehended vnder the former, but yet for Conviction

præterimus, Et maxime cum & terrestres domini nequaquam æquo animo tolerandum putent si iussiones suas servi ex parte audiant & ex parte contemnant. Si enim pro arbitrio suo servi dominis obtemperant, ne in iis quidem in quibus obtemperaverint, obsequuntur, &c. Salvian. de provid.

a Note of a good conscience. Conscience of small Duties.

Conuiction sake I distinguish them. The good conscience makes not conscience onely of great duties and sins, but euen of the least, knowing that as Gods great power and omnipotence is the same in the making of an Angell and a worme, so Gods authority, wisdome and holinesse is the same in the least Commandements as in the greatest of them all. It makes conscience specially of Iudgement and the weightie matters of the law, but yet doth not therefore thinke it sobar discharge of all care in smaller things, doth not thereupon challenge a dispensation from obedience in meaner matters, as if it were needlesse scrupulositie, as too much preciseneſſe to tythe Mint, Anise, and Cummin. A Cummin seed indeed is but a small thing, a very toy, but yet as small a thing, and as light as it is, yet will it lie heauy vpon a good Conscience, being iniuriously and fraudulently detained from the Leuites. The *Pharisies* tythed Mint, Anise, and Cummin, but they

neglected the weightie matters of the Law. It is no good Conscience that lookes to small, and neglects great duties, neither is it a good conscience on the other side, that looks after the great and weighty duties, and makes no reckoning of Mint and Anise. Our Sauiour sayes both ought to be done. *Pharaoh* could be content that the people should goe sacrifice, but he cannot abide that *Moses* should be so precisely precise, that not an hoofe shall be left behinde. Alas, an hoofe is but a toy, not worth the mentioning, what need *Moses* be so strict as to stand vpon an hoofe? Yet a good Conscience will stand vpon it, hauing Gods Cõmandement, and will make conscience as wel of carying away hoofs as of whole bodies of cattell. It is with a good conscience as it is with the apple of the eye, of all the parts of the body it is the most tender, not only of some great thinges, or ioints vnder the eye-lid, but euen the smallest haire and dust grieues & offends it. It is so with a tender good con-

Conſcience, not only beames, but alſo moats diſquiet the eye of a good conſcience; and not onely greater, and fouler ſins, but euen ſuch as the world counts veniall trifles doe offend it. A good Conſcience ſtraines not onely at a Camell, but at a Gnat alſo. Neither doth our Sauiour blame the *Phariſees* ſimply for ſtraining at a Gnat, but for their hypocriſie, who would pretend conſcience in ſmaller things, & meane while made none in the greater; for otherwiſe a good Conſcience indeed hath a narrow paſſage for a Gnat, as well as for a Camell. The leaſt corn of grauell galles his foote that hath a ſtrait ſhooe, but he that hath a large, wide ſhooe, ſlopping about his foot, it is no trouble to him. It is iuſt ſo with Conſciences good and euill.

A Gnat is but a ſmall thing, yet Pope *Hadrian* the fourth was choakt with a Gnat, and one fly, though but a ſmall thing to a whole box of oyntment, yet *dead flies* as ſmall things as they are, *cauſe the oyntment of the Apothecary to ſend*

Bal. pag. of Popes pag. 97.

ſend forth a ſtinking ſauour. Ec. 10. 1. and *ſo doth a little folly*, though but little do a great deale of hurt. And therefore a good cõſcience liues by *Salomons* rule, *Giue not water paſſage, no not a little.* And take not onely the *Foxes* but the *little Foxes*, which ſpoyle not only the *Vines*, but the *tender Grapes*. Can. 2. 15. It knowes a little will make way for much. *Pharaoh* is content that the people, the men ſhould go ſacrifice, *Exod.* 10. but their *little ones* ſhould not goe; he knew if he had but their *little ones*, with him, he ſhould be ſure enough of their returne; therefore *Moſes* will not onely haue the men goe, but their *little ones* alſo And therfore a good conſcience deales with Satan as *Marcus Arethuſius* dealt with his tormentours, who hauing pulled downe an Idolatrous Temple, & being vrged by them to giue ſo much as would build it vp againe, refuſed it; They vrged him to giue but halfe, he ſtill refuſed; they vrged him at laſt to giue but a *little*, towards it, but he refuſed to giue them

Putantes pauperem vel mediocritatem petebant pecuniarum, noviſſime vel paucum aliquid exigebant. Quibus ait nec obolum vnum pro

ſo

ſo much as one halfe-penny, *No not an halfe-penny* ſayes he, *for it is as great wickednesse to conferre one halfe-penny in caſe of Impietie, as if a man ſhould beſtow the whole.* What was a poore half-penny, is was a very ſmall matter, ſpecially conſidering in what torture hee was, from which an half-penny gift would haue releaſed him. Indeed an half-penny is but a little, but yet it is more then a good conſcience, dares giue to the maintenance of idolatrous worſhip. A good conſcience will not giue ſo much as a farthing token to ſuch an vſe, as little a thing as it is. *For he that is faithfull in that which is leaſt, is faithfull alſo in much, and he that is vniuſt in the leaſt, is vniuſt alſo in much,* Luke. 16. 10. Euen the leaſt things are as great trials of a good cõſcience as the greateſt. A good conſcience will not gratifie Satan, nor neglect God, no not in a little.

omnibus dabo. Hiſt. Tripart. l. 6. c. 12. Ad impietatem inquit, obolũ conferre vnum perinde valet at ſi quis conferat omnia. Theodor: l. 3. cap. 7.

Put mens conſciences now vpon this trial. Who crackes not of his good cõſcience: there be none if they may bee beleeued, but they haue good conſciences

ſciences. But why are they good? They can ſwallow no Camells. Well yeeld them that, though if their entrals were well ſearcht, a man might finde huge bunch backt camells, that haue gone downe their gullets. They can ſwallow no camells, but what ſay they to gnats, can they ſwallow them? Tuſh, Gnats are nothing, whole ſwarmes of them can goe downe their throats, and they neuer once cough for the matter. Foule and groſſe ſcandalls, ſuch as are infamous amongſt meere heathen, ſuch Camells they ſwallow not, but what ſay they to vnſauory and naughtie thoughts which their hearts proſecute with delight, what ſay they to them? Gnats doe not ſwarme more abundantly in the fennes, then ſuch vile thoughts doe in their hearts. The prodigious oaths of wounds, blood, the damned language of Ruffians, and the Monſters of the earth, oh their hearts would tremble to haue ſuch words paſſe out of their mouths, but yet what ſay they to the neater, and

civi-

ciuilised Complements of Faith and Troth? tush those are trifles, meere Gnats, alas, that you shall stand vpon such niceties. To rob a man vpon the high way, or to breake vp a mans house in the night, this is a monstrous Camell, but in buying and selling to ouer-reach a neighbour a shilling or two, a penny or two, what say they to that? oh God forbid they should be so strictly dealt withall, that is a small thing, their throats are not so narrow but these Gnats will goe downe easily enough. To beare false witnes in an open Court of Iustice, or to be guilty of pillory periury, these bee foule things, but to lye a little for a mans aduantage, or to make another man merriment, what thinke they of this? This is a very Gnat, they are ashamed to straine there at all. Tell many a man of his sinne in which he lyes, that his sinne and a good conscience cannot stand together, what is his answer, but as *Lot* of *Zoar*, *Is it not a little one. Gen.* 19. 20. But the truth is, that these little ones are great

euidences of euill cõscience. It is but a dreame to thinke our Consciences good that make no conscience of smal sinnes and duties.

The conscionable *Nazarite*, now did not only make conscience of guzling and quaffing whole cups of wine, but of eating but an huske, and a kernel of a Grape. What a trifle is the kernell of a Grape, and yet a good conscience will care to please God as well in abstinence from the kernell, as from the cup. Indeed when *David* had defiled and hardned, his conscience with his adultery, then hee could cut *Vriahs* throat, and his heart smites him not for it, but when vnder his affliction his conscience was tender & good, his heart smites him but for cutting *Sauls* coat, 1 *Sam* 24. 5. See the nature of a good Conscience, it will smite not onely for cutting *Sauls* throat, but for cutting *Sauls* coat, but for an appearance, vpon a suspition, and but a iealousie of euill.

Paul speakes of a *pure conscience*, 2 *Tim.* 1. 3.

1.3. Now it is with a pure cõſcience as it is with *pure religion*, Iam. 1.17. *Pure religion and vndefiled, is to keepe a mans ſelfe* vnſpotted *of the world*. It hates not onely wallowing with the Sow in the mire, but is ſhy of very ſpots; and *hates* not onely the *fleſh*, but the *garment*, not onely that is groſely beſmeared, but which is but *ſpotted with the fleſh*, *Iude* 23. according to that Ceremonial, *Leuit*. 15.17. And this is that which differences ciuility and a good conſcience, Ciuilitie ſhunnes myre, but is not ſo trimme as to waſh off ſpots, this is the pure Religion of a pure Conſcience. *Pure Religion and vndefiled, is to keepe a mans ſelfe vnſpotted*, therefore they who are not vnſpotted, are not vndefiled, but if their Conſciences bee but ſpotted, yet are they defiled. Mens Conſciences are as their Religion is, and pure Religion is ſpotleſſe.

Yea to cloſe this point, the greateſt euidence of a good cõſcience is in making conſcience of ſmal things. Whilſt men

men feare great ſins, or are carefull of maine duties, it may be their reputation and credit may ſway them, which otherwiſe would bee impeached. So that in them it may be a queſtion, whether it be conſcience or credit that is the firſt mouer, but in ſmaller things where there is no credit to be had, nay, for ſcrupling whereof, a man may rather receiue ſome diſcredit from the world, here it is more euident that good Conſcience ſets a man on. This then is a note of a good conſcience, to make Conſcience, as of ſmall duties, ſo of ſmall ſinnes, as he that feares poiſon feares to take a droppe, as well as a draught, & men feare not onely when a firebrand is thruſt into, but when a ſparke lights vpon their thatch.

Probat enim etiam in maioribus ſi res exigat executorem ſe idoneum fore à quo minora compleantur. Saluian. de prouid. l. 3.

CHAP. VIII.

Three other notes of a good Conſcience.

A Third note of a good Conſcience may be this. It loues and likes a Mini-

Miniſtrie and ſuch Miniſters as preach, and ſpeake to the Conſcience. It likes ſuch a diſpenſation of the Word as comes home to it, whether for direction or reproofe. The Word is the rule of conſcience, and a good conſcience is deſirous to know the rule it muſt liue by. The Word muſt iudge the conſcience, this euery good conſcience knowes, and therefore grudges not to be repoued by it, as knowing that if it will not abide the Words reproofe, it muſt abide the Words iudgement. Therefore a man with a good Conſcience ſpeakes as *Samuel, Speake Lord, thy ſeruant heares.* He can ſuffer the words of exhortation, and not count himſelfe to ſuffer whilſt it is done. He is of *Dauids* minde, *Let the righteous ſmite me, and it ſhall be a kindneſſe; let him reproue me and it ſhall bee an excellent oyle which ſhall not breake mine head. Pſal.* 141. 5. It is with good conſcience as with good eyes that can abide the light, and can delight in it, whereas ſicke and ſore eyes are troubled and offended there-

3. Note of good Conſcience: 1 o loue a Miniſtry that ſpeaks home to the Conſcience.

with. A ſound heart is like ſound fleſh that can abide not onely touching, but alſo rubbing and chafing, and yet a man will not bee put into a chafe thereby; whereas contrarily if the leaſt thorne or vnſoundneſſe bee therein, a touch at vnawares prouokes a man, if not to ſmite, yet to angry words and language of diſpleaſure. Vnſound fleſh loues to be ſtroakt, and to be handled gently, the leaſt roughneſſe puts into a rage. That is the ingenuity of a good Conſcience, which was the good diſpoſition of *Alipius*, when hee was vnwittingly taxed by *Auguſtine* for his Theatricall vanities; hee was ſo farre from being angry with him, though he conceiued him purpoſely to ayme at him, that hee was rather angry with himſelfe, and loued *Auguſtine* ſo much the better.

Tu ſcis Deus noſter quod tunc de Alipio ob illa peſte ſanando non cogitauerim. At ille in ſe rapuit meq; illud non niſi propter ſe dixiſſe credidit, & quod alius acciperet ad ſuccenſendum mihi, accepit honeſtius adoleſcens ad ſuccenſendum ſibi, & ad me ardentius diligendum. Aug. conf. li. 6. cap. 7.

Put mens conſciences vpon this triall, and we ſhall ſee what the conſciences of moſt men are. Let a man preach in an vnprofitable maner, let him ſpēd himſelfe in idle curioſities & ſpeculations,

lations, let him be in combate with obſolete or forrain hereſies, ſo long their Miniſter is a faire and a good Churchman. But let him do as God commands *Ezekiel* to doe, *Ezek.* 14.4. *Anſwer them according to their Idols*, preach to their neceſſities, let him call them, & preſſe them to holy duties, and reproue them for their vnholy practiſes, and make knowne vnto them what euill Conſciences they haue: what then is their carriage and behauior? Euen that *Amos* 5. 10. *They hate him that rebukes in the gate; and they abhorre him that ſpeaks vprightly*. This Miniſtry that comes to the Conſcience will not downe with them. It lets in too much light vpon them, & *Ahab* hates *Micaiah* for drawing the curtaines ſo wide open, he cannot endure ſuch punctuall & particular preaching that clappes ſo cloſe to his Conſcience. A plaine ſigne that *Ahab* hath a rotten and an vnſound Conſcience. *Micaiah* could not be more punctuall with *Ahab* then *Iſaiah* was with *Hezekiah*, *Iſa.* 39. 6. 7. And yet what

Scio me offenſurum quàm plurimos qui generalem de vitiis diſputationem in ſuam referunt contumeliam, & dum mihi iraſcuntur ſuam iudicant conſcientiam multoq; prius de ſe quam de me iudicant. Hieron. ad Ruſtic. Monach.

ſayes *Ezekiah? Good is the word of the Lord which thou haſt ſpoken*; as if he had ſaid, a good Sermon, a good Preacher, all good. Whence comes this good entertainment of ſo harſh a meſſage! *Hezekiah* had a good Conſcience, and therefore though the meſſage went againſt the haire, yet hee could giue good words, *Let the righteous ſmite me, and it ſhall be a kindneſſe*, *Pſal.* 141.1, but that is when the righteous ſmites the righteous, what if the Prophet ſmite *Amaziah*? he wil threaten to ſmite him againe, 2 *Chron.* 25.16. *Forbeare, why ſhouldeſt thou be ſmitten?* Why if *Paul* preach of a good Conſcience, and ſo make *Ananias* his Conſcience to ſmite him? *Ananias* will command the ſtanders by to ſmite him on the mouth. Now let al the ſtanders by iudge whether *Ananias* haue any good Conſcience in him, who cannot brooke the preaching of good Conſcience. Let men profeſſe they know God as long as they wil, yet if they ſlight the word, or ſwell at it, or be diſobedient to it when

when it is laid to their Conſcience, *Paul* makes it a manifeſt ſigne of a defiled cõſcience, *Tit.* 1. 15, 16. *Their minde and their conſcience is defiled.* How appeares that? *They profeſſe they know God, but they are diſobedient.* When therefore the Miniſtry of the Word ſhall charge thee with dutie, or reprooue thee for ſin, and then thou ſhalt charge the Miniſter with railing, and girding, & that this Sermon was made for the nonce for thee, & thou likeſt not that Miniſters ſhould be ſo particular, &c. In Gods feare be aduiſed to looke to thy Conſcience, and know it that thou haſt a naughtie Conſcience: when the Miniſtry of the Word ſmites thy conſcience, then for thee to ſmite the Miniſter with reproachfull & diſgraceful tearmes, to ſmite him with thy mouth: How is thy conſcience better then *Ananias* his, that commands to ſmite *Paul* on the mouth? hee that cannot brook that Gods Miniſters ſhould not diſcharge a good Conſcience in preaching to the Conſcience, be bold to

challenge that man for a man of an euill conſcience

4. Note of a good conſcienee. To do duty for Conſcience ſake,

4. That is a fourth note of a good conſcience, *Rom.* 13.5. ye muſt be ſubiect *for Conſcience ſake*. To doe good or abſtaine from euill meerly for conſcience ſake, is a note of a right good cõſcience indeed. Conſcience as we ſaw before, doth excite and ſtirre vp, and binde to the doing of good, and binds from the doing of euil. Now when the Conſcience vpon iuſt information frõ the Word ſhall preſſe, and forbid, and thẽ a man ſhal, becauſe cõſcience forbids, forbear; or becauſe it preſſes, performe obedience: thus to doe good, or not to do euil, for Conſcience ſake, is a note of a good Conſcience. It euidences a good Conſcience when the maine weight that ſets the wheeles on work is conſcience of Gods commandement. When it is that, *Pſal.* 119.4. that ſets a man on work, *Thou haſt commanded vs to keepe thy precepts diligently*. The end of the commandement is loue, 1 *Tim.* 1.5. and *loue is the fulfilling*

of

of the commandement, *Rom.* 12. But what loue? *From a pure heart and a good conſcience*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. When conſcience of the commandement caries a man to the fulfilling of the end of it, then doth ſuch loue come from a good Conſcience. *Salomons* deſcription of a good man, *Eccl.* 9. 2. is that *hee feares an oath*. He ſayes not, that ſweares not; but that feares an oath. For a man not to ſweare may be the fruit of good education, and of the awe a man hath ſtood in of his Gouernours, but to *feare an oath*, argues that a man *feares the commandement*, *Pro.* 13. 13. and to feare the commandement is the note of a good conſcience.

Here let mens conſciences be tried. Thou prayeſt in thy family, heareſt the Word, keepeſt the Sabbath, &c. Now ſearch thine heart, and make inquirie what it is that carieth thee to theſe duties. Doeſt thou doe them for conſcience ſake? Doſt thou find Conſcience to vrge and preſſe thee, & to giue ſatisfaction of the Conſcience, and obedi-

ence to the iniunctions thereof. Are theſe things done? If ſo, it is a ſigne of a good Conſcience. But this diſcouers the naughtineſſe of mens conſciences, who though they bee found in ſome good duties, or in the auoiding of ſome euils, yet is it not conſcience that workes them thereto. *Yee muſt be ſubiect not onely for wrath*, that is, for feare of the Magiſtrates wrath and reuenge, *but for conſcience ſake*, *Rom.* 13.5. It is no good Conſcience when a man will be ſubiect for his skins ſake, and leaſt hee ſmart by the Magiſtrates ſword, but then a mans Conſcience is good, when in obedience to Gods Word, and in conſcience of his Commandement he ſubiects. The like may be ſaid of all byends. Ye muſt doe good duties, not for profit, not for credit, not for vaine-glory, not for law, but for conſcience ſake; or elſe euill conſciences yee haue in that yee do. The *Shechemites* receiue circumciſion, *Gen.* 34. And is not circumciſion Gods Ordinance? And is it not ioy of them that they will ioyne

to

to the Church, and profeſſe the true Religion? Yes ſurely, if it were done for conſcience. I, but it is not done for conſcience ſake? Alas no ſuch matter, but for *Hamors* ſake the Lord of the Towne, and for *Shechems* ſake their yong maſter, and for the hope of gains ſake: *Shall not their cattell, and their ſubſtance, and euery beaſt of theirs be ours? Gen.* 34.23. For the oxen ſake, and not for conſcience ſake are the *Shechemites* circumciſed. *Shechem* for *Dinahs* ſake receiues the Sacrament. Oh the zeale and forwardneſs that ſome wil profeſs on a ſuden. What frequenters of holy exerciſes? But what, is it for Conſcience ſake? No ſuch matter, but *Shechem* is in hope of a match with *Dinah* & all theſe ſhewes of Religion are neither for Gods ſake, nor cõſcience ſake, but all for *Dinahs* ſake, all vnder hope of preferment by a rich mariage. They were goodly ſhewes of zeale, *Iohn.* 6. 22. 24. in ſeeking and following after Chriſt, but it was neither for Chriſt, nor conſcience ſake, but *ver.* 26. for the loaues,

loaues, and the bread, and their bellies ſake.

Many of the heathens, *Eſth.* 8. 17. *turned Iewes.* Was there not ioy of ſuch Proſelytes? not a whit, for not the fear of God, but *the feare of the Iewes fell vpon them*; as many frequent the publike aſſemblies more for feare of the ſtatute, then for feare of the commandement. The officers of the King helped the Iewes, *Eſth.* 9. 3. Was it for Conſcience ſake? Nothing leſſe, but for wrath ſake and for feare, *becauſe the feare of Mordecai fell vpon them.*

If the Phariſees had done all that (*Mat.* 6.) for Conſcience ſake, which they did for vaine-glory ſake, they had had the glory of good Conſciences. Many preached the Goſpell in *Pauls* dayes, *Phil.* 1. Does not ſo good a worke argue a good conſcience? Yes, if it had beene done for Conſcience ſake; but that was done for contention ſake, not to adde ſoules to the Church, but to adde ſorrowes to *Pauls* afflictions.

It

It is a note of a good Conſcience, when that which we doe is done with a reſpect vnto the commandement of God, *Pſal.* 119. 6. and not with a ſquint reſpect vnto our own priuate, for praiſe or profit. It was a good argument of thoſe *Bohemians* good Conſciences in plucking downe Images, that they beate downe only painted and wooden Images, whileſt *Sigiſmund* the Emperour pulled downe ſiluer and golden ones, to melt into money for pay of his ſouldiers, as they plead for themſelues, when they were held Heretiques for their fact. If they had puld downe ſuch Images as hee did, they might haue beene thought to haue done it for gaine, and not for Conſcience ſake.

Vtrine maioris hæretici illinc qui pictas & ligneas, an qui aureas & argenteas imagines è templis exigerent, & ad conflandam monetam igne adorerent? Dubra. hiſt Bohem. l. 24.

How great is often the zeale of many againſt faſhions, and ſuch vanities? How well it were if it were for Conſcience ſake, and not for enuy againſt ſome particular perſon, whom they do diſtaſte, and ſo for the perſon, the vanitie. For if it be for conſcience ſake, how

how is it that thoſe vanities, ſuch great offences to their Conſciences, found in ſome diſtaſted perſons, are yet no trouble to their conſciences, being the very ſame, if not worſe in their owne fauorites, and aſſociates? Iudge whether ſuch zeale come from Conſcience, or from corrupt affection, whether it be not more againſt the perſon, then againſt the ſinne.

5 Note of a good conſcience. Holy boldneſſe. *Bona conſcientia prodire vult, & cõſpici, ipſas nequitia tenebras timet.* Senec. ep. 98. *Qui non deliquit decet audacem eſſe & confidenter proſe, & proterue loqui.* Plaut in Aniph.

5. We haue a fift note of a good conſcience in the text. *And Paul earneſtly beholding the Counſell.* Here is a marke of a good Conſcience in his lookes, as well as in his words; in his face as well as in his ſpeech. *Paul* is here conuented before the Counſell, with what face is he able to behold them? And *Paul* earneſtly *beholding the Counſell*, A good conſcience makes a man hold vp his head euen in the thickeſt of his enemies. It can looke them in the faces and out-face a whole rabble of them aſſembled on purpoſe to caſt diſgrace on it. That may bee ſaid of a man with a good Conſcience, which is

ſpoken

ſpoken of ſome of *Dauids* men, 1 *Chron.* 12.8. *Whoſe faces were like the faces of Lyons, for the righteous is bold as a Lyon, Pro.* 28.1. Now might *Paul* truely haue ſaid as *Dauid, Pſ.* 57.4. *My ſoule is among Lions, I lye among them that are ſet on fire.* And now how fares hee? what is he all a mort? lookes hee pale and blanke, doth hee ſneake or hang downe his head, or droope with a dejected countenance? No, *Paul* is as bold as a Lyon, and can face theſe Lyons, and *earneſtly* fixe his countenance vpon the beſt of them. A good Conſcience makes a mans face as God had made *Ezekiels, Ezek.* 3.8.9. *Behold I haue made thy face ſtrong againſt their faces, and thy forehead ſtrong againſt their foreheads. As an Adamant harder then flint haue I made thy forehead, feare them not neither bee diſmaid at their lookes.* Such hartening and hardening comes alſo from a good Conſcience. A good Conſcience makes a man goe, as the Lord in another ſenſe tells Iſrael hee had done for them, *Leuit.* 26. 13.

I haue made you goe vpright. A good Conſcience erects a mans face, and lookes, it is no ſneaking ſlinker, but makes a man goe vpright. As contrarily, guilt deiects both a mans ſpirits, and his lookes, and vnleſſe a man haue a Sodomiticall impudency, *Iſay* 3.9. or an whores forehead, *Ieremiah* 3.3. which refuſes to bee aſhamed, makes him hang downe the head.

Paul fixes his eyes here, and lookes earneſtly vpon them, but what if they had looked as earneſtly vpon him? yet would not his good Conſcience haue beene out-faced. See *Acts* 6. 15. *All that ſate in the Counſell looked ſtedfaſtly on him*; namely on *Steuen*. If but the high Prieſt alone had faced him, it had beene ſomewhat, but all that ſate at the Counſell looked ſtedfaſtly on him. Surely one would thinke ſuch a preſence were able to haue damped, and vtterly to haue daſhed him out of countenance. But how is it with him? Is hee appalled? Is

Is hee damped? *They ſaw his face as it had beene the face of an Angell*, ſayes the text. As wiſdome, *Eccl.* 8.1. ſo a good Conſcience makes the face to ſhine. A good Conſcience hath not onely a *Lions*, but an *Angels* face; it hath not onely a Lyon-like boldneſſe, but an Angelicall dazling brightneſſe, which the ſicke and ſore eyes of malice can as ill endure to behold, as the Iſraelites could the ſhining brightneſſe of *Moſes* face. The face of a good Conſcience tels enemies that they are malicious lyers. And no wonder that a good conſcience hath ſuch courage and confidence in the face, ſtanding before a whole Councell, when it ſhall be able to hold vp it head with boldneſſe before the Lord himſelfe, at that great day of the generall Iudgement. Euen then ſhall a good Conſcience haue a bold face.

CHAP.

Chap. IX.

Two other, and the laſt notes of a good Conſcience.

6. Note of conſcience To ſuffer for conſcience.

A Sixt note of a good Conſcience followes, namely, that which we haue, 1 *Pet.* 2. 19. When a man *for Conſcience towards God endures griefe, ſuffering wrong.* A good conſcience had rather that *Ananias* ſhould ſmite, then it ſelfe ſhould. *Ananias* his blowes are nothing to the blowes of Conſcience. *Ananias* may make *Pauls* cheekes glow, but conſcience giues ſuch terrible buffets, as will make the ſtouteſt heart in the world to ake. That will pinch, and twitch and gird the heart with ſuch griping throws, that all the blowes, and tortures that *Ananias* his cruell heart can inuent are nothing to them.

Now therefore a man that ſets any ſtore by a good conſcience, will not part with the Peace or Integritie there of

of vpon any terms. He rates the goodneſſe of his Conſcience farre aboue all earthly things. Wealth, liberty, wife, children, life it ſelfe, all are vile, and cheape in compariſon of it. And therefore a man of a good Conſcience will endure any griefe, & ſuffer any wrong to keepe his conſcience good towards God. Such a good Conſcience had *Daniel*, *Dan.* 1.8. *Hee purpoſed in his heart that hee would not defile himſelfe with the portion of the Kings meat.* That is, he was fully ſetled & reſolued in his Conſcience, come what would come, he would not do that which would not ſtand with a good cõſcience. But what if it could haue gotten no other meat? Without all doubt hee would rather haue ſtarued then haue defiled his conſcience with that meat. He would haue loſt his life rather then haue loſt the Peace, and Integrity of his Conſcience. It ſeemes a queſtion of great difficulty, which was put to the three Children, *Dan.* 3. Whether they will giue the bowing of their bodies to the

golden Idoll, or the burning of their bodies to the fiery Fornace. But yet they finde no ſuch difficulty therein, they were not carefull to anſwere in that matter, *ver.* 16. Of the two fires they chooſe the cooleſt, & the eaſieſt. The fire of a guilty conſcience is ſeauen times hotter, & more intolerable, then the fire of *Nebucadnezzars* Fornace, though it be heated ſeuen times more then it is wont to be heated.

If the queſtion come betweene life and good Conſcience, that one of the two muſt bee parted withall, it is an hard caſe. Life is wondrous ſweet and precious. Skin for skin, and all that a man hath will he giue for his life, *Iob.* 2. 4. What then ſhould a man do in ſuch an hard caſe? Heare what is the reſolution of a good conſcience, *Act.* 20. 24. *My life is not deare vnto me, ſo that I may fulfill my Miniſtration with ioy.* And wherein lay his ioy, but in his good Conſcience, 2 *Cor.* 1. 12. It is all one as if hee had ſaid, I care not to loſe my life to keepe a good Conſcience.

A good Conſcience in that paſſage of the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* 1. 19. is ſecretly cõpared to a ſhip. Now in a tempeſt at Sea, when the queſtion is come to this, whether the goods ſhall be caſt out, or the Ship be caſt away, what doe the Marriners? See *Act.* 27. 18. 38. *They lightned the ſhip, & caſt out the wheat into the Sea.* The Marriners will turne the richeſt Commodities ouer-boord to ſaue the ſhip, for they know if the ſhip be caſt away, then themſelues are caſt away. Thus it is with a man that hath a good conſcience, when the caſe comes to this pinch, that either his outward Comforts, or his inward Peace muſt wrack, he will cheareſully *caſt the wheat into the Sea.* will part with all earthly commodities & comforts, before he will ruſh, and wrack his conſcience vpon any rock. He knowes if the ſhip be wrackt, if his Conſcience bee crackt, that then himſelfe, & his ſoule is in danger of being caſt away, & therefore he wil throw away all to ſaue conſcience from being ſplit vpon the rocks

and being swallowed vp in the sands.

There is as great a difference betwen a good conscience, and all outward things euen vnto life it selfe, as is between the arme, and the head or heart. The braine & the heart are vitall parts, therefore when the head is in danger to bee cleft, or the heart to be thrust through, a man will not stand questioning whether he were best aduenture his hand, or his arme to saue his head, or his heart, but either of these being in danger, the hand & the arme presently interpose themselues to receiue the blow, and put themselues in danger of being wounded, or cut off, rather then the head or heart should be pierced. A man may haue his hand, or arme cut off, and yet may liue, but a wound in the braine or heart is mortall. It is so in this case. A good conscience values its owne peace aboue all the world. It is that wherein a Christians life lyes, therefore he will suffer the right hand or foot to be cut off, and lose all rather then expose Conscience to danger.

A man may go to heauen with the loſſe of a limbe, and though he halt, *Mat.* 18. 8. but if a man loſe his life, if Conſcience be loſt, all is loſt. A man may goe to heauen though he loſe riches, liberty, life, but if a good Conſcience be loſt, there is no comming thither. All things compared to Conſcience are as far beneath it, as the leaſt finger beneath the head. He were a mad man that would ſuffer his skull to bee cleft to ſaue his little finger, nay but the paring of his nayle. And yet the world is full of ſuch mad men, that ſuffer conſcience to receiue many a deep wound and gaſh, to ſaue thoſe things which in compariſon of good Conſcience, are but as the nayle parings to the head.

Try mens Conſciences here and we ſhall finde them exceeding ſhort. A good Conſcience will endure any griefe, and ſuffer any wrong rather then ſuffer the loſſe of its owne peace. God commands *Amaziah*, 2 Chro. 25. to put away *Iſrael*, oh! but *what ſhall I*

doe for mine hundred Talents? Tuſh, what are an hundred Talents? A good Conſcience in yeelding obedience to God is a richer treaſure then the Eaſt and Weſt *Indies*. And yet how many be there that will craze their Conſcience an hundred times before they will loſe one Talent by obedience to God, out of a care to keepe a good Conſcience. A talent? nay, that is too deepe, neuer put them to that coſt, they will ſell a good conſcience, not for gaining, but for the taking of a farthing token. God and good Conſcience ſay, *Sanctifie the Sabbath.* Poſſibly ſome halfe-ptnny cuſtomer comes to a Tradesmans Shop on a Sabbath, and askes the ſale of ſuch, or ſuch a commoditie. Now the mans Conſcience tels him of the commandement, tels him what God lookes for, tels him it cannot ſtand with his peace to make markets on that day, &c. But then he tels conſcience, that if he be ſo preciſe, he may loſe a cuſtomer, and if hee loſe his cuſtomers, he may ſhut vp his Shop-windowes.

windowes. An Inne-keepers Conſcience tels him that it is fitter that hee ſhould bee attending Gods ſeruice at his houſe on his day, then that hee ſhould be waiting on his gueſts. But then he replies to conſcience, that then his takings will be but poore, & this is the next way to pluck down his ſigne. So here lyes a diſpute between conſcience and Gaine, which of theſe two muſt be parted with. If now in this caſe a man will grow to this reſolution, By Gods helpe I am reſolued to keepe a good Conſcience in keeping Gods Commandement and Sabbath. I will rather loſe the beſt cuſtomer I haue, & the beſt gueſt I haue, then the peace if a good conſcience. If I beg, I beg; I will ſay of my cuſtomers as *Iacob* of his children, *Gen.*43.14, *If I am bereaued of them, I am bereaued.* I will truſt God with my eſtate, before I will hazard my conſcience; Giue me ſuch a man, ſuch a Tradeſman, and will bee bold to ſay he is a man of a good conſcience. But contrarily, when men are

so set vpon Gaine, that so they may haue it, they care not how they come by it, they will dispense an hundred times with their obedience to God if any thing be to bee had, if these haue good Consciences let any iudge. How would such lose their blood and lines, that will not lose such trifling gaines for the safetie of their conscience? We *haue not yet resisted vnto blood*, the more we owe to God, that know not what that resistance meanes. Alas, how would those resist vnto blood that set Conscience to sale vpon so base prices as they doe.

Peter speakes of *a fiery tryall*, 1 *Pet.* 4. 12. If God should euer bring that trial amongst vs, what a company of drosse Consciences would it find out? We haue no *fiery triall*, we haue but an *airy tryall* onely, and yet how many euill consciences it discouers. Many a man could finde in his heart to pray in his family, to frequent good exercises, and company, hee is conuinced in his conscience, that thus he should doe, and

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Conſcience preſſes him to it. But why then are not theſe things done? *A Lyon is in the way.* Hee ſhall loſe the good word and opinion of the world, hee ſhall haue ſo many frowns, & frumpes, and cenſures, and ſcoffes, that he cannot buckle to this courſe. Many are in *Zedekiah* his caſe; he was conuinced in his conſcience, that he ought; & it was his ſafeſt courſe to go out to the *Chaldeans*, queſtionles his conſcience preſt him to it, and bids him go out. Why then goes he not? He is afraid, *Ier.* 38. 19. *that he ſhall be mockt.* Such Conſciences as will not preferre their owne good word a comfort before the good or ill words of the world; Such conſciences as more feare the mockes and flouts of men on earth, then they doe the grinning mocks of the Deuils in hell; Such as will not preferre the peace of Conſcience before all other things, are meere ſtrangers to good Conſcience.

7 Note of a good conſcience.

The ſeuenth and laſt note remains. And that is in the Text, *Vntill this day.* Con-

Constancy in good.

Constancy and *perseuerance* in good, is a sure note of a good conscience. *Paul* had beene young, and now was old, & yet was old *Paul* still, still the same holy man he was. Time changes all things but a good Conscience, and that is neither changed by Time, nor with Time, Age changes a mans fauour, but not a good mans faith; his complexion, not his religion; and though his head turn gray, yet his heart holds vigorous still.

Vntill this day.] And this day was not far from his dying day. And how held he out to his last day? Heare as it were his last and dying breath, 2 *Tim.* 4 7. *I haue fought a good fight, I haue finished my course, I haue kept the faith.* He sayes not, I haue finished my faith, I haue kept my life, as many may, but *I haue finished my course, I haue kept the faith.* He kept his faith til he had finisht his course, not only here, *vntil this day*, but there vntill his finishing day. So long he kept the faith, and therefore so long a good Conscience, for as the losing

ſing of them goe togethet. 1. *Tim.* 1. 19. ſo the keeping of them goe together, therefore keeping the faith, he alſo kept a good conſcience till he finiſht his dayes.

Vntill this day. And yet one would wonder that he ſhould keepe it to this day. conſidering how hardly he had bin vſed before, vntill, and now at this day. The moſt of thoſe things. 2. *Cor.* 11.23. were before this day. *Often vnder ſtripes, in priſons oft,* and yet ſtands conſtant in the maintenance of the libertie of his Conſcience, *verſ.* 24.25. *Thrice I ſuffered ſhipwracke, &c.* and yet made no ſhipwracke of a good conſcience. *verſ.* 26.27. in a number of perils, in *perill of falſe brethren*, and yet his cõſcience playes not falſe with God, neither is it weary of going on in a religious courſe.

Here then is the nature of a good conſcience, and the tryall of it.

A good conſcience holds out conſtantly in a good *Cauſe* without *deflection*, and in a good *Courſe* without

out *defection*.

1. In a *good cauſe*. Let a good conſcience vndertake the defēce of a good Cauſe, and it will ſtand rightly to it, & neither grow weary, nor corrupt. It will not make ſhews of countenancing *Pauls* cauſe till he come before *Nero*, & then giue him the ſlippe, and giue him leaue to ſtand vpon his owne bottome, and ſhift for himſelfe as well as he can. A conſcionable Magiſtrate, & a Iudge, who out of a conſcience of the faithfull diſcharge of his place, takes in hand the defence of a good, or the puniſhment of a bad cauſe, will not leaue it in the ſuddes, will not be wrought by feare or fauour, to let Innocency bee thruſt to the walles, and Iniquitie hold vp the neb, but will ſtand out ſtiffe, and manifeſt the goodneſſe of his conſcience in his Conſtancie.

2. In a *good Courſe*. A man that is once in a good Courſe, hauing a good conſcience, will neither bee driuen, nor be drawne out of that good way to his dying day. There be tentations on the right

right hand, and there be tentations on the left, but yet a good Conſcience wil turne neither way, *Pro.*4.27. but keeps on foreright, and preſſes hard to the marke that is ſet before it. Try it with tentations on the left hand. Try it by the mockings and deriſions of others whom it ſees in good wayes, will this ſtagger or ſtumble it, & make it ſtart aſide? Not a whit, but it will go on with ſo much the more courage rather, *Iob* 17.6.7.8.9. *He hath made mee alſo a by-word of the people, and aforetime I was a Tabret.* Was not this enough to ſhake others, to ſee ſuch a prime man as *Iob* thus vſed, thus ſcorned and mocked? Not a whit; for all this, *The righteous ſhall hold on his way, & he that hath clean hands, be ſtronger and ſtronger.*

Try it by mockings and deriſion perſonall, by perſonall infamy and reproach, let a mans owne ſelfe bee derided, be defamed, this will goe neerer then the former, what, will this moue him out of the way? No: He will loſe his good name, before his good-

Si reddere beneficium non aliter quam per ſpeciem iniuriæ potero æquiſſimo animo ad honeſtum

con-

Conſcience. See *Pſ.* 119. 51. *The proud haue had me greatly in deriſion, yet haue I not declined from thy law.* And though *Michol*, 2 *Sam.* 6. play the flouting foole, yet *Dauid* will not play the declining ſoole, but if to be zealous, bee to be a foole, he will *bee yet more vile.* And though *Ieremy* was in *deriſion dayly, and euery one mocked him*, yea, *and defamed him*, yet he was rather the more then the leſſe zealous, *Ier.* 20. 7. 9. 10. The righteous *Pſ.* 125. 1. are *like Mount Sion that cannot bee remoued, but abides for euer.* What likelihood that a puffe of breath ſhould remoue a Mountain? When men can blowe downe Mountaines with their breath, then may they ſcoff a good cõſcience out of the waies of godlineſſe & ſinceritie. Mount *Sion*, and a good Conſcience abide for euer.

But theſe happily may be thought lighter trialls, put a good conſcience to ſome more ſmarting, and bleeding tryals, then theſe pettier ones are, and yet there ſhall we finde it as conſtant as in the former.

conſilii per mediam infamiam tendere. Nemo me bi videtur plus virtutem, nemo illi magis eſſe devotus quã qui boni viri famam perdidit ne conſcientiã perderet. Senec. epi. 82.

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Let the Lord giue the *Sabæans*, *Chaldæans*, and Satan leaue to ſpoyle *Iob* of his goods, and children, will not then *Iob* giue vp his Integrity? doe yee not thinke that he will curſe GOD to his face? So indeed the deuil hopes, *Iob* 1. 15. But what is the iſſue? what gets the deuill by the tryall? onely giues GOD argument of triumph againſt him in *Iobs* conſtancy, *Iob* 2. 3. *And ſtill he holdeth faſt his integrity.* As if he had ſaid, See for all that thou canſt do, in ſpight of all thy ſpite, and miſchieuous malice, hee holds faſt his Integrity vntill this day. See the terrible trials, to which they were put, *Heb.* 11. 37. *They were ſtoned, ſawne aſunder, &c.* and yet all could not make them ſhake hands with a good Conſcience. The raine, floods, and winds, could not bring downe the houſe founded vpon the rocke, *Matth.* 7. Notwithſtanding all tryals, a good Conſcience ſtands to it, and holds it owne, and ſpeakes as once Father *Rawlins* did to the Biſhop, *Rawlins you left me, Rawlins you finde me, and Raw-*

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Rawlins by Gods grace I will continue.

Try yet a good Conſcience farther with the tentations on the right hand, which commonly haue as much more ſtrength in them aboue the other, as the right hand hath aboue the left, and yet we ſhall finde the right hand too weake to plucke a good Conſcience out of its ſtation.

It was a ſore tentation wherewith *Moſes* was aſſaulted. The treaſures, and pleaſures, the honours and fauours of the Egyptian Court, and Princeſſe. Al theſe wooe him not to goe to the people of God. Had that people been ſetled and at reſt in Canaan, yet had it bin a great tentation to prefer Egypt before Canaan. But the people are in Egypt, in affliction, in bondage, therfore ſo much the more ſtrength in the tentation. What will you be ſo madde to leaue all for nothing, certaine honours for certaine afflictions? who call tell but you may be raiſed to this greatnes to be an inſtrument of good to your people! you by your fauour in the Court

Court may be a means to eaſe them of their bondage, and ſo you may do the Church ſeruice with your greatneſſe, &c. Here was a tentation on the right hand, & with the right hands ſtrength. Well, and how ſpeeds it? Is *Moſes* able to withſtand it? See *Heb.* 11.24.25.26. *He refuſed to be called the ſonne of Pharaohs daughter, &c.* All would not doe, nor ſtirre him a whit. Thoſe faithfull Worthies before mentioned, could not bee ſtirred with all the cruelties their aduerſaries could inuent. I, but it may bee a tentation on the right hand, might haue made them draw away the right hand of fellowſhip from a good conſcience. Well, their enemies therfore will try what good they can doe that wayes. *Heb.* 11.37. *They were tempted*, that is, on the right hand, they were ſollicited and enticed, and allured with faire promiſes of honours, fauours, preferments, as *Bonner* vſed to deale with the Martyrs, hee had ſometimes butter and oyle, as well as fire and faggot, in his mouth.

Thus were they tẽpted, but yet what auailed theſe tentations? Iuſt as much as their ſtones, ſawes, ſwords, priſons, all alike. They for all theſe tentations keepe a good conſcience to their dying day, and hold faſt the faith and truth vnto the end.

A good conſcience is of the mind of thoſe trees in *Iothams* parable, *Iudg. 9.* It will not with the Oliue loſe its *fatneſs*, nor with the Figtree loſe its *ſweetnes*, nor with the Vine its *wine* of cheerfulneſſe, to haue the fatteſt, and ſweeteſt preferments and pleaſures of the world, no though it were to raign ouer the trees.

Benenolo Iuſtina præcepit vt aduerſus fidẽ patrum imperialia decreta diſſeret, Illo vero ſe impia verba prolatum abnuente celſiorem honoris gra-

It was an excellent reſolution of *Benenolus* in his anſwer to *Iuſtina* the Arrian Empreſſe, profering preferments to him to haue beene inſtrumentall in a ſeruice which could not bee done with a good Conſcience. *What doe ye promiſing me an higher degree of preferment for a reward of impiety? yea euen take this from me which already I haue, ſo that I may keep a good conſcience.* And

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ſo forthwith he threw at his feet his girdle, the enſigne of his honour. Thus doth a good Conſcience throw and trample honour and preferment vnder foot to maintaine its owne integritie? Thus can nothing corrupt a good conſcience. *I haue beene young, and now am old, and yet neuer ſaw I the righteous forſaken*, to wit, of God, *Pſalm. 37. Dauid* out of his experience could haue ſaid as much in this point, I haue bin yong and now am old, yet neuer ſaw I God, and godlineſſe forſaken by the righteous, by the man that had a good conſcience. But the man that had a good Conſcience when hee was young, will hold out & haue it when he is old. It is the great honour and grace of a good Conſcience which *Walden* thinkes he ſpake to the diſgrace of *Wickliffe*, *Ita vt cano placeret quod iuueni complacebat*, He was young and old, one and the ſame man. Old age decayes the body, the ſtrength, the ſenſes, but Conſcience it touches not, that holds out ſound to death. As of Chriſt in another ſenſe,

dũ ſpoſpondit ſi mandata perficeret, cui Beneuolus. *Quid mihi pro impietatis mercede altiorem promittis gradum? hunc ipſum quem habeo auferte dum integram fidei conſcientiam tuear. Ac protenus cingulum ante pedes eius obiecit*, Sigonius de occid. Imp. l. 1. pag. 200.

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Heb.13. ſo may it be ſaid of a good cõſcience in this, *Yeſterday, and to day, and the ſame for euer.* A good conſcience is no changeling, but let a mans eſtate change from rich to poore, from poor to rich, or let the times change from good to euill, or from euill to worſe; or a mans dayes change from young to old, let his haires and head change, yet among all theſe changes a good conſcience will not change, but hold it owne vntill its laſt day.

Now put mens Conſciences vpon this triall, and their inconſtancy either in good cauſes, or courſes, wil diſcouer their naughtines. In a good cauſe how many are like *Darius*? His conſcience ſtruggles a great while for *Daniel*, hee knew he was innocent, he knowes the action to be vniuſt, and therefore labours all day till the ſetting of the Sun for his deliuerance, *Dan.6.14.* but yet ouercome with the Preſidents and Princes vrgency, *ver.16.* he commands him to the Lyons Denne. Here was a naturall Conſcience ſtanding for equi-

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tie and iuſtice, but yet no good conſcience, it holds but till Sunne ſet, and his Conſcience went downe with the Sunne. His Conſcience yeelds and is ouercome, though it know the act to be vniuſt.

Pilats Conſcience makes him plead for Chriſt. In his conſcience he acquits him, & thrice ſolemnly profeſſes that hee findes no fault in him, and therefore cannot in Conſcience condemne him, yea withall ſeekes to releaſe him, *Iohn* 19. 12. Is not here now a good Conſcience? Indeed it had been ſo in this particular fact, if his Conſcience had beene inflexible, and had held out. But when *Pilate* heares them ſay, that if hee be his friend, hee is no friend to *Cæſar*, *Ioh.* 19. 12. and whileſt withall hee is willing to content the people, *Marke* 15. 15. Now that there is feare on the one ſide, and deſire to curry fauour on the other, where now is his conſcience? Now hee preſently deliuers him to bee crucified, though hee knowes in his Conſcience that

there is no fault in him. What a good Conſcience hath many a Iudge, and Lawyer? How ſtiffely will they ſtand in, and proſecute a iuſt caſe till a bribe come & puts out the very eyes of their Conſcience. Their Conſciences are of ſo ſoft a temper, that the leaſt touch of ſiluer turnes their edge preſently. They hold out well till there come a tentation on their left hand, that is, in their right hand. *Pſal.* 144.8. *Whoſe mouth ſpeakes vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falſhood.* If once the right hand be a right hand of falſhood, the mouth will ſoone ſpeake vanity, though before it ſpeake Conſcience. Who would not haue thought *Balaam* to haue beene a man of an excellent Conſcience? *If Balak would giue me his houſe full of ſiluer and gold, I cannot goe beyod the word of the Lord my God, to doe leſſe or more, Num.* 22.18. But yet beſides that faltring in thoſe words *I cannot goe*, whereas the language of good conſcience would haue beene, *I will not goe*; beſides that I ſay, be-

before he ends his ſpeech, ſee how the hope of promotions works, and works his Conſcience like waxe before the fire, *verſe* 19. *Now therefore I pray you tarry here alſo this night, that I may know what the Lord will ſay vnto mee more.* A faltring inference: If his Conſcience had beene good it would haue inferred ſtrongly thus, Now therefore I pray get you gone, and trouble me no longer. He knew in his Conſcience the people ought not to bee curſed, and that hee ought not to goe, and yet comes in with *I pray tarry all night, &c.* Truly *Balak* needed not to haue beene ſo lauiſh and ſo prodigall, as to offer an houſe full, one handfull of his Siluer and Gold will frame *Balaams* Conſcience to any thing.

The like tryall may be made of mens Conſciences, by their *inconſtancy* in good courſes, and this will condemne three ſorts as guilty of euill Conſciences.

1. Such as ſometimes being conuin-

ced of the neceſſity of good courſes, do ſet vpon the practiſe of them, & begin to looke towards Religiō, & religious duties; till meeting with ſome of their ſuppoſed wiſer neighbours, they be aduiſed to take heed, they may bring thē-ſelues into greater note then they are aware of, they will incurre ſharper cenſures then they thinke of, &c. and ſo ſuddenly all is daſht, all is quaſht and quencht. There is a diſeaſe among beaſts they call the *Staggers*, and it is a diſeaſe too frequent in mens Conſciences, who ſometimes are on, ſometimes off, one day begin, and next day ceaſe good courſes. That may be ſaid of many mens conſciences, which *Iacob* ſpeakes of *Reuben*, *Gen.*49.4. *Vnſtable as water*. The water moues as the windes blow. If the wind blow out of the Eaſt, then it moues one way; if out of the weſt, then it moues another, the cleane contrary, and vpon euery new winde a new way. So many, let them heare a conuincing, & a good perſwading Sermon mouing to good duties,

then

then they will ſet vpon them; let them againe heare either ſome mocks, or reproaches for thoſe wayes, or ſome ſage aduiſe frō one they count wiſe, againſt the waies of conſcience, they are as far off againe as euer. Theſe ſtaggering, irreſolute, and watry Conſciences are farre from good ones.

2. Such as in their youth, or when the world was low with them, were very zealous and forward; But what are they now at this day? True downeright *Demaſſes*, zealous whē they were young, but now old and cold: zealous when they were meane, but now the world is come vpon them, *Demas* like they haue forſaken goodneſſe, and embraced the world, haue gotten now worme-eaten, and world-eaten Conſciences. The zeale of Gods houſe was wont to eate them vp, but now the world hath eaten vp them, and all their good Conſcience.

3. Thoſe that haue made good the profane Prouerb, *Young Saints and old Deuils*, whoſe hatred of Religion and good

good conſcience is greater then euer was their loue thereto, as *Amnons* was towards *Thamar*, 2. *Sam.* 13. 15. They were zealous and forward frequenters of Gods houſe and ordinances; zealous enemies againſt Swearing, and Sabbath-breaking, &c. But what are they at this day? Yeſterday indeed zealous profeſſors of holineſſe, but what are they to day? To day malicious ſcoffers of godlineſſe, haters and oppoſers of goodnes, the onely ſwearers & drunkards in a Country. What kind of conſciences haue theſe? None of *Pauls* Conſcience, *I haue liued in all good Conſcience vntill this day*. What then? Iuſt the conſciences of *Hymenæus* and *Alexander*, 1 *Tim.* 1. 18. 19. They once made great profeſſion of Conſcience, but now enemies to *Paul*, and blaſphemers, men, as *Paul* ſpeaks, that had put *away good conſcience*, they did not through want of watchfulnes let it *ſlip*, or *ſteale away*; but as if it would neuer haue bin gone ſoone enough, they *put* and *draue it away*, ἣν ἀπωσάμενοι, *Beza*

Za tranſlates it, *Qua expulſa.* They vſed their Conſciences as *Amnon* did *Thamar* after his luſt ſatisfied, 2 *Sam.* 13.15,17. *Ariſe, be gone*, ſayes hee to her, and when ſhe pleads for her ſelfe, he cals his ſeruant, and ſaies vnto him, *Put out this woman, and bolt the doore after her*, put her out ſo, as thee may bee ſure not to come againe. They dealt with their Conſciences as Colledges deale with Rake-hels, expelled them without all hope of re-entry. Thus many profane Apoſtatizing back-ſliders cannot be content to loſe good conſcience, vnleſſe *Amnon*-like they may put it away with violence, & expel it. And how can they haue good Conſcience that haue put it away? He hath not his wife, that hath put her away, and giuen her a bill of diuorce. In the dayes of Popery and darkneſs, the Deuill it ſeemed walked very familiarly amongſt them, and hence we haue ſo many ſtories of fayries, & of childten taken out of Cradles, and others layd in their roomes, whom they called *changelings*.

Since

Since the light of the Goſpell theſe Diuels and Fairies haue not been ſeen amongſt vs, but yet wee are ſtill troubled with *changelings*. Some, Prieſts, and Ieſuites haue changed; ſome, the world hath changed; ſome, goodfellowſhip and the Ale-houſe hath changed. Theſe haue plaid the fayries, haue taken and ſtolne away goodly, forward and feruent Chriſtians, and haue layd in their roomes Earthlings, Worldlings, Popelings, Swearers, Drunkards, malicious ſcorners of all goodneſſe. Thus haue theſe fayries in ſtead of faire and comely children, brought in theſe lame, blinde, deformed and wrizzled faced *changelings*, that any one may eaſily ſee them to be rather the births of ſome hobgoblins, then the Children of God. If therefore wee would euidence our Conſciences good, labour to hold to the laſt, and reſt not in youth, but labour to haue age found in the way of righteouſneſſe. This is a Crowne of glory, and this is right good Conſci-

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ence to liue therein vntill our dying day. All the former ſixe are nothing without this laſt.

Chap. X.

The comfort and benefit of a good Conſcience, in the caſe of Diſgrace, and Reproach.

VVEE are now come to the fift and laſt point which was propounded: The *motiues* to perſwade vs to get good Conſciences. The *motiues* thereunto may be many, I will keepe my ſelfe within the compaſſe of fiue.

1. *Motiue.* The incomparable and vnſpeakeable comfort, and benefit thereof in ſuch caſes and times as all other comforts faile a man, and wherein a man ſtands moſt in neede of comfort. Theſe caſes or times are fiue.

1. Motiue to a good conſcience

1. The

1. The Time and Caſe of *Diſgrace* and *Reproach.*
2. The Time of *Common feare,* and *Common Calamity.*
3. The Time of *Sickneſſe,* or outward croſſes in a mans goods.
4. The Time of *Death.*
5. The Time & *Day of Iudgement.*

Interim elige ſocium qui cum omnia ſubtracta fuerint fidem ſeruat dilectoribus ſuis ne recedit in tempore anguſtiæ. Ber. de Conſc.

In all theſe, or in any of theſe times it is good to haue ſuch a friend or companion that will ſticke to a man, and bee faithfull to him when all other things faile him. Such a friend, & ſuch a companion, is a good Conſcience. *A friend loues at all times, and a brother is borne for aduerſitie, Prou.* 17.17. But in ſome of theſe caſes a brother and a friend may bee falſe and will not, or may be weake and cannot helpe nor pleaſure a man, but a good Conſcience is better then all friends and brethren whatſoeuer; when they will not, or cannot, or may not, yet then will a good Conſcience ſtick cloſe to a man, and bee a ſure friend to him. Let vs ſee in the particulars the truth of it.

1. In

1. In the time and caſe of *Diſgrace, Infamy, Reproach,* and wrongs of that kinde, the comfort and benefit of a good Conſcience is vnſpeakeable. When a man ſhall be traduced, ſlandered, falſly accuſed and condemned, then in ſuch wrongs will a good Conſcience doe the office of a faithfull friend, will ſticke to, & ſtand by a man, and will comfort and hearten him againſt al ſuch iniuries. *Paul* is here conuented before the Councell as a malefactor, he hath an whole Councell bent againſt him. What now is his comfort, and his defence againſt ſuch an heape of accuſers as doe affront him? This it is, *Men and brethren, I haue liued in all good Conſcience.* As if he had ſaid, Impeach, traduce, accuſe and condemne me as you pleaſe, ye be it knowne vnto you, that I haue a good conſcience, and this my good Conſcience is it which ſhall comfort and vphold me againſt all your iniurious and vnequall proceedings. You may bring forth falſe witneſſes againſt mee, but my Con-

The comfort of a good Conſcience in caſe of diſgrace and reproach.

Conſcience doth, and will witnes for me, you may condemne me, yet my Conſcience acquits, and abſolues me. And thus doth *Paul* ſhelter himſelfe vnder his good conſcience.

The like wee may ſee in the next Chapter. *Ananias* and the Elders come and bring *Tertullus*, and he is feed to be *Pauls* accuſer, and he lyes heauy and hainous things to *Pauls* charge, *verſ.* 5. *We haue found this man a peſtilent fellow and a mouer of ſedition among all the Iewes throughout the world, a ring leader of the ſect of the Nazarens, &c.* Here be foule things, what will *Paul* be able to ſay to all this? Will not this be enough to ſinke him downe vtterly, to ſee ſo many banded together, and ſuch great ones combined to countenance ſuch an accuſation? How will he be able to ſubſiſt? Now then behold the benefit, and comfort of a good Conſcience. Hee holds vp his former buckler, and ſmites *Ananias*, and the reſt with his former weapon, *verſ.* 16. *Herein doe I exerciſe my ſelfe to haue alwaies a Conſci-*

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ence void of offence towards God, and towards men. *Ananias* and the Elders haue a mercenary *Tertullus* to accuſe him, *Paul* hath no man dares bee ſeene to plead for him, none will be retained in his cauſe, but yet now Conſcience ſtepts out, & ſtops the foule mouth of this ſlanderous Oratour, and puts ſpirit, and heart into *Paul* to plead his owne Cauſe againſt them all. Conſcience ſeems on this manner to animate him; Feare not *Paul* the accuſations of this *Tertullus*, I witneſſe for thee thine Innocency. I iuſtifie it to the teeth of *Tertullus*, that he is one whoſe malice and couetouſneſſe hath made him ſet his Conſcience to ſale; ſtand vp therefore, and ſpeake boldly for thy ſelfe, dread them not. Welfare a good conſcience yet, that will ſpeake comfort to *Paul*, and make *Paul* ſpeake with courage, when none elſe dare bee ſeene in his cauſe.

It was an ill caſe *Dauid* was in, *Pſal.* 69.20, 21. *Reproach hath broken mine heart, and I am full of heauineſſe, and I*

looked for ſome to take pitie, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none: they gaue me alſo gall for my meat, and in my thirſt they gaue mee vineger to drinke. A very hard caſe indeed. Where was now *Dauids* familiar friend, his acquaintance with whom hee was wont to take ſweet counſell, what was become of him now? Poſſibly ſome of his acquaintance were at this time like a broken tooth, & a foot out of ioynt, *Pro.25.19. Confidence in an vnfaithfull man is like a broken tooth, and a foot out of ioynt.* Others it may be that had profeſt him loue, were ready to faſten a poyſoned tooth in him. This was *Dauids* caſe, and this may be any mans caſe; but now at ſuch a time, and in ſuch a pinch appeares the excellency and benefit of a good Conſcience. Though al a mans friends ſhould proue *Iobs* friends, like the Winter-brooks of *Teman*, that in winter ouerſwell the bankes, but in the ſcorching heat of Sõmer proue drie ditches, yet then, euen then well fare a good conſcience

ence. That will heale *Dauids* heart broken with reproach, that will cheere him vp in his heauineſs, that will ſweeten the gall, & take away the ſharpnes of the vineger, which his enemies haue giuen him to drinke.

There is a generation, Pro. 30. 14. *whoſe teeth are as ſwords, and their iaw teeth as kniues*; and *Prou.* 12. 18. that generation *ſpeakes as the piercing of a ſword.* There is a generation, whoſe *words are wounds that goe downe into the innermoſt parts of the belly.* Pro. 18. 8. Theſe be dangerous generations. But what generation are they? *Generations of Vipers.* Pſal. 140. 3. *Adders poyſon is vnder their lips.* *Iunius* tranſlates it, *Venenum ptyados*, The poiſon of the *ſpitting Serpent.* They bee then generations of ſpitting ſerpents, euen of fiery ſerpents, that haue their tongues ſet on fire from hell, & ſo they ſpit fiery poyſon in the faces of Innocents. Now there is no man can liue in this world, at whom theſe adders will not ſpit, no man can be free from the ſprinkling of their poyſon. The diſci-

ple is not aboue the maſter; If theſe ſnakes haue hiſſed at the Lord of the houſe; and if theſe ſpitting Serpents haue caſt their poiſon in his face, why would they feare to doe it to the ſeruants? But is there then no blame againſt this poyſon? No buckler againſt theſe ſwords? Yes, there is the ſoueraign balme, & the impenetrable buckler of a good conſcience. It is a balſome that will allay the poyſon of theſe Adders, that it ſhall neuer burſt a mans heart, or if theſe ſwords pierce the very innermoſt bowels, yet this will ſo ſalue theſe wounds, that they ſhall not ranckle, nor become mortall. Oh! how mortall is this adders poiſon, how fatall are theſe ſwords, how keene their edge, & how full of paine their wounds, where inward guilt giues ſtrength vnto them? But integrity and goodneſſe of Conſcience, is a pretious balme of *Gilead*, that takes away the venome of this poyſon, and the ſtinging ſmart of the wounds of theſe ſwords.

Let *Paul* liue with euer ſo good a con-

conſcience before God, and man, *Act.* 24.16. yet *Tertullus* will play the ſpitting adder, and hee will ſpit, yea, ſpue forth his poyſon in his face, and in the face of an whole Court will not ſpare openly to ſlander him for an arrant varlet, a lewd, peſtilent, and a villanous fellow. Such driuell will the malicious world ſpit in the face of Godlines. But marke now the benefit, & comfort of a good Conſcience. Either a good Cõſcience with *Stephens* Angelicall face wil dazle, & ſhame the diuels oratours, 1 *Pet.* 3. 16. *Hauing a good Conſcience that they may be aſhamed,* or els like *Paul* it can ſhake off thoſe vipers without ſwelling or falling downe dead. Yea, if Satans oratours will needs be opening their mouths againſt *Paul*, yet ſo good is his Conſcience, that as *Iohn Hus* appealed from Pope *Alexander* to Pope *Alexander*, namely, from him in his anger to him in his cold blood, & better aduiſed, ſo dares *Paul* appeale from *Tertullus* to *Tertullus*, *Dauid* from *Shimei* to *Shimei*, frõ enemies to enemies,

from their tongues to their hearts, from their mouthes to their Conſciences, as knowing their owne integritie to bee ſuch, as that their enemies owne hearts giues their tongues the lye, and tels them that againſt their conſciences poſſeſſed with meere malice, they are hurried on in Satans ſeruice. *Tertullus* knowes he lyes, and his owne Conſcience tells him he lyes in his throate, that *Paul* is an honeſter man then himſelfe, yea, and the comfort is, that *Pauls* Conſcience comforts him, and aſſures him that *Tertullus* his Conſcience aſſures him all this, So vnſpeakeably ſweet is the comfort of a good Conſcience.

Dauid complaines of a great affliction. *Pſal.*35.11. *Falſe witneſſe did riſe vp, they layd to my charge things that I knew not.* What ſhould a man doe in ſuch a caſe, if hee had not the comfort of a good Conſcience witneſſing for him? But now at ſuch a pinch appeares the benefit of a good Conſcience; Let euer ſo many riſe vp falſely to witneſſe

neſſe againſt him, yet his conſcience will witneſſe as faſt for him. *My friends ſcorne mee*, ſayes *Iob*, *Iob* 16.20. They witneſſed againſt him to bee a wicked perſon, and an hypocrite, they cenſured and condemned him, but what was *Iobs* comfort? That ſame, *verſe* 19. *Behold my witneſſe is in heauen, and my record is on high.* That was one comfort, but that was not all, he had alſo a witneſſe on earth, and his record below. Vpon whoſe record, and witneſſe, ſee with what ſolemnitie and with what confidence he ſtands, *Iob* 27.2,6. *As God liueth who hath taken away my iudgement, and the Almightie who hath vexed my ſoule, All the while my breath is in mee, and the Spirit of God is in my noſtrils, my lips ſhall not ſpeake wickedneſſe, nor my tongue vtter deceit; God forbid that I ſhould iuſtifie you, till I dye I will not remoue mine integrity from me, my righteouſneſſe I will hold faſt, and will not let it goe, mine heart ſhall not reproach mee ſo long as I liue.* As if he had ſaid, As the Lord liues,

whileſt there is breath in my bodie, I will not yeeld vnto your accuſations, nor yet acknowledge my ſelfe guiltie of that you do charge me withal. Vrge me and preſſe mee what you will, yet will I neuer let goe mine hold. Why what is it that makes *Iob* thus ſtiffe, & reſolute, what is it that ſupports him with ſuch an excellent ſpirit? that *v. 6 Mine heart ſhall not reproach me ſo long as I liue.* Indeed you reproach, cenſure, & condemne me, you lay heauy things to my charge; But I haue ſearched the records of my conſcience, I haue called that vnpartial witnes to teſtifie the truth, and I find conſcience witneſſing ſtrongly on my ſide, and therefore doe what you can, you ſhall neuer beat me downe. *Iobs* friends may proue fickle, and falſe, but his owne Conſcience will proue true to him, that will plead for him, animate him, and comfort him againſt all their calumnious and iniurious reproaches, and giue him cauſe of much ioy and triumph. *Iob* then had his witneſſe in heauen, & *Iob* had

Nam ſi in his in quibus me criminantur, teſtimonium Conſcientiæ meæ non ſtat contra me in conſpectu Dei, quo nullus oculus mortalis intenditur, non ſolum contriſtari non debeo, verum etiam exultare & gaudere, quia merces mea multa eſt in cœlis. Neq; enim intuendum eſt quam ſit amarum, ſed quam falſum ſit quod audio, & quam verax pro cuius nomine hoc audio. Aug. contra lit. Petil. l. 2.

had his witneſſe on earth, God and his own conſcience, two witneſſes beyond all exception; and in the *mouth of two witneſſes euery truth ſhall ſtand.* Conſcience is a thouſand witneſſes, and God is aboue Conſcience. And what Conſcience witneſſes concerning matter of fact, God himſelfe will iuſtifie the ſame. He that hath a good conſcience, hath a ſure friend, that will neither ſlinke nor ſhrinke at any hand. Nay he hath two good friends, and two ſubſtantiall witneſſes, whoſe teſtimonies, though ſecret, yet are ſuch as ſweetly ſolace the heart of man againſt open reproaches, ſlanders, falſe witneſſes, & all wrongs and iniuries of that kinde whatſoeuer. The teſtimony of Conſcience is full of comfort, becauſe of the vndoubted certaintie, and the vnqueſtioned infallibility thereof, ſo that it voycing on a mans ſide, ſtrangely cheares his heart, *Prou.* 27. 19. *As in water face anſwers to face, ſo doth the heart of a man vnto man;* That is, as ſome expound it, As a man may ſee his face

face by looking in the water, ſo a man may ſee himſelfe, and what hee is by looking into his Conſcience. If a man ſhould be told that he had ſome filth or bloach on his face, if he would goe look into the water, or eſpecially into a looking-glaſſe, hee ſhould eaſily ſee whether it were ſo or no. And if looking into the water, or glaſſe, he could not ſee any ſuch filth in his face, though an hundred ſhould offer to beare him downe to the contrary, yet would hee beleeue his own eyes before them all. So here, whē at any time foule mouths are open, and ſpare not to caſt aſperſions vpon innocency, and to lay ſcandalous things to a mans charge, then a man by looking into his Conſcience can ſee himſelfe, and can finde whether he be guilty or not, & ſeeing himſelfe in that water, or in that glaſſe to be cleare from that dirt & filth which malice would caſt in his face, it ſo fils his heart with comfort, and confidence, as makes him treade all reproach, and falſe iudgement of man vnder

In ſpeculo Conſcientiæ ſtatus interioris hominis & exterioris cognoſcitur. Non immerito Conſcientiam ſpeculo comparauit, quoniam in ea tanquam ſpeculo rationis, oculus tam indecens quam quod decens in ſe eſt, claro aſpectu apprehendere poteſt. Bern de Conſc.

vnder his foot.

This appeares by the contrary. Let a man bee praiſed, and magnified euer ſo, let euer ſo much good be ſpoken of him, and euer ſo much worth be attributed to him, yet if his owne heart tell him, that all is falſely ſpoken of him, and there is indeed no ſuch matter in him, he hath at all no true comfort in all the good words of the world. *Pro.* 27.21. *As the fining pot for ſiluer, the furnace for gold, ſo is a man to his praiſe,* that is, a man is to trie his praiſe that is giuen him, & if his conſcience tell him it is vndeſerued, hee is to ſeparate this droſſe of flattery from himſelfe. All the commendations, and admirations of the world what cõfort can they yeeld, whileſt a mans Conſcience tells him, that they are all but lying and glauering flatteries. What though the poore multitude feeling the ſweet, and refreſhment of a Phariſees almes, do canonize a Phariſe for a Saint, yet what is he the better, or what cõfort hath he the more, whilſt his own conſcience reproaches

Non ideo bona eſt conſcientia mea quia vos illã laudatis. Quid enim laudatis quod non videtis? Aug. de ver. dom. ſer. 49 Si autem nõ aurem ſolam percutit fraudulenta criminantis, verũ etiam conſcientiã mordet veritus crimen, quid mihi prodeſt ſi me conſciuis laudibus totus mundus attollat. Ita nec malam cõſcientiam ſanat prætonium laudantis, nec bonã vulne-

proaches, and reproues him, and tells him that he is a vaine-glorious hypocrite, and that though theſe whom he feedes, ſend him to heauen, yet he ſhall haue his portion with hypocrites, and vnbeleeuers. What is a man the better for a flattering Funerall Commendation, whilſt in the meane time hee is vnder the reproach, and torture of his cõſcience, in the place of tormẽt? How many a mã is there that hath the good word of all men, no man but ſpeakes well of him, but yet in the meane time, his own heart giues him bitter words, and rates him to his face? How well contented would ſuch a one bee, and what an happy exchange would hee hold it, to haue all the world raile on him, & ſlander him, ſo his own conſcience would but ſpeak friendly & kindly to him? So he could find hony from his Conſcience, hee would not care what gall he had from the world.

Experience lets vs ſee that ſuch as haue bin malevolent and iniurious againſt others innocency though they haue

rat conuiciantis opprobrium. Aug contra lit. Petil. l. 2 In omni quod dicitur ſemper tacite occurrere debemus ad mentem & interiorem teſtem, & iudicem requirere. Quid enim prodeſt ſi omnes laudant & cõſcientia accuſat? aut poterit obeſſe ſi omnes derogent, & ſola Conſcientia defendit? Greg. ſup. 125. hom. 6.

haue bin abetted & born out by their vmpires, and aduocates, that for handfuls of barly, and ſcraps, and cruſts, haue laboured to maintaine ill cauſes, and worſe perſons, yet they haue had no peace nor reſt of heart. Their aduocates haue bid them ſit downe with reſt and victory, the day is theirs, they haue cheered them, and ſtriuen to deſerue their fee, and yet their guilty clients being netled with the inward guilt of their Conſciences, haue ſtill bin haunted with a reſtles & perplexed vnquiet ſpirit, which others made guilty, and cenſured for offenders by ſuch mercenary vmpires, haue poſſeſſed their ſoules in patience, and haue bin cheerfull and merry-hearted, from the comfort of their owne innocent and cleere Conſciences.

So that looke as the naughty Conſcience can ſpeake no comfort, though all the world ſpeake well of it; ſo contrarily, though all the world reproach, cenſure, ſlander, &c. yet a good Conſcience can, and will ſpeake peace, and com-

comfort to a mans heart.

The *Corinthiãs* did exceedingly ſlight *Paul*, He was this, and he was that, but how was he affected with it? See how, 1 *Cor*. 4. 3. 4. *But with me it is a very ſmall thing that I ſhould bee iudged of you.* I know full well what your cenſures are; & what ſentẽce you paſſe vpon me, but know ye that I no whit at all regard the ſame, I make no reckoning therof at al. Why? might the *Corinthians* ſay, do ye count vs ſo ſilly, & ſo iniudicious? Nay ſayes *Paul*, I ſpeake it not as if you were ſillier then others, with me it is a ſmall thing to be iudged of you, or of mans iudgement, let them be the moſt wiſe, & iudicious that are in the world, or of *mans Day*, though by men convened in ſolemne maner for iudgement; I paſſe not what their cenſure is, I regard not their miſ-iudgings of me. I, but what makes *Paul* thus ſlight mens iudgement of him? That in the fourth verſe, *I know nothing by my ſelfe*, mine owne Conſcience iudges me not, nor ſentenſes me, that layes no ſuch thing to my charge,

Fælix conſcientia non ſibi in al. quo conſcia, quæ non propriũ iudicium nec alienum veretur. Bern. de Conſci.

Beata plane quæ non alieno æſtimatur iudicio, ſed domeſticis percipitur ſenſibus tanquam ſui iudex. Neq; enim popularem opiniones pro mercede aliqua requirit, neq; pro ſupplicio pauet. Ambroſ de offic. l. 2. c. 1.

Non poſſunt aliena verba crimen

charge, and therefore ſo long as my Conſcience is on my ſide, I regard not a whit what the world iudges.

affigere quod propria non recepit conſcientia. Ambr. in Pſal 38.

Now then ſee what a motiue this is to get and keepe a good Conſcience. As we would be glad to haue comfort and confidence againſt the malice of opprobrious tongues, as wee would haue a counter-poiſon againſt their venome, ſo get a good Conſcience. Here is that which may make vs in loue with a good cõſcience. Reproach muſt full often be the portion of Gods deare children. *Iſraelites* ſhall bee for euer an abomination to *Egyptians*. And though the *Egyptian* dogges moued not their tongues againſt *Iſrael*, *Exodus* 11. 7. yet dogged *Egyptians* will moue their tongues and their teeth too. The Apoſtles muſt be counted the *filth of the world, and the off-ſcowrings of all things*, 1 *Cor.* 4. 13. The Lord Ieſus himſelfe dranke of this cup, *Pſal.* 22. 6, 7. *I am a worme and no man, a reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people. All they that ſee me laugh me to ſcorne,*

ſcorne,&c. The way to heauen is a narrow way, and this narrow way is beſet with ſnakes, ſpitting adders, barking, and biting, and mad dogs, and a man muſt paſſe to heauen *through good and euill report*, 2 *Cor.* 6.8.

Currentem attrites ſuper aſpidas & baſiliſcos delinare ſemem vipera non poterit. Proſp. de Aug. *Conſcia mens recti famæ mendacia ridet, Sed nos in vitium credula turba ſumus.* Ouid.

Well then it being ſo hard a paſſage how may a man get himſelfe ſo armed that he may paſſe cheerefully through all theſe? get a good conſcience, and thou ſhalt regard theſe ſnakes, ſerpēts, vipers, and dogs, no more then a ſtraw vnder thy foot. If thou haue a good conſcience thou ſhalt *laugh* at the reproaches of enemies, as *Eliphaz* ſpeaks of deſtruſtion *Iob* 5. A good Conſcience will ſay vnto thee, Goe on cheerily in the waies of GOD, what euer diſcouragements the Deuil raiſes by reproaches and ſlanders, feare them not, behold I acquit and excuſe thee, I will beare thee out, I will witneſſe at Gods tribunal for thee. Lo, I giue thee balme againſt their poyſon, a bukler againſt their ſwords. Let them curſe, yet I will bleſſe thee; let them reproach, yet

yet I will comfort; let them condemn, yet I will abſolue thee, let them defame thee, yet I will bee thy compurgator: let them caſt dirt in thy face, yet I will waſh it off; let them diſquiet, yet behold, I am ready to cheere thee. Oh the ſweet and vnconceiuable comfort that a good Conſcience will ſpeake, euen in the middeſt of *the cruell ſpeakings of vngodly men, Iude.* 15. that will ſpeake comfortably when they ſpeake cruelly, and moſt comfortably, when they ſpeake moſt cruelly: Such is the benefit of a good Conſcience in caſe of reproach and diſgrace.

CHAP. IX.

The comfort and benefit of a good Conſcience in the times of common feares and calamities, in the times of perſonall euils, as ſickneſſe, and afflictions, for Conſcience ſake.

IN the ſecond place, let vs ſee what the benefit and comfort of a good

2 The comfort of a good conſcience in the times of commō feares and calamities.

Conſcience is, in the times of *Common feares*, & *Common calamities*. When the world is full of feares and dangers, and calamities breake in, how fares it then with an euil conſcience, in what taking are they that want a good conſcience? They are abſorpt with feares, and the very tidings puts them to ſuch perplexities, *Iſa.7.2. Ahas* is told of a confederacy between *Syria* & *Ephraim*, & ſee in what feares hee and his people were, *His heart was moued, & the heart of his people as the trees of the wood are moued with the wind*. So deeply doe reports and euill tidings affect them, the trees in the wood are not ſo ſhakē with the bluſtering windes, as euill conſciences are with euill tidings. When ill newes and ill conſciences meet, there is no ſmall feare. The ſignes that prognoſticate ſorrowfull times, ſee how deeply they affect euill Conſciences, *Luk.21.25. There ſhall be ſignes in the ſun and the moone, and in the ſtars, and vpon the earth*, diſtreſſe *of Nations with* perplexity, *mens hearts* failing *them* for feare,

feare, *and for looking after thoſe things which are* comming *in the earth.* But when calamitity indeed comes,& not ill newes, but ill times, and ill conſciences meet, how are they then? They are then either in the caſe the Ægyptians were in the famine, *Gen.* 47. 13. *They were at their wits end;* or as thoſe in a ſtorme at Sea, *Pſ.*107.26,27. *Their ſoule is melted becauſe of trouble, They reele too and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man, and all their wiſedome is ſwallowed vp.* Exceſſe of feare puts them into as great diſtempers, as exceſſe of wine, it vtterly ſtupifies them, and they by feare, are as much bereft of the vſe of their ſenſes, wit, & wiſdom, as a drunkard is in his drunkenneſſe. Yea, their feares make them not onely drunk, but ſtarke madde, *Deut.*28,34. *Thou ſhalt be oppreſſed and curſed alway, ſo that thou ſhalt be madde for the ſight of thine eyes which thou ſhalt ſee.* The perplexities of an euill conſcience in euil times, are vnſpeakeably grieuous. *Iſay.* doth exceeding liuely deſcribe them, *Iſa.* 31.

7.8.9. *Therefore ſhall all hands be faint, and euery mans heart ſhall melt, And they ſhall bee afraid, pangs and ſorrowes ſhall take hold of them, they ſhall be in pain as a woman that trauells, they ſhall be amazed one at another, their faces ſhall bee as flames, &c.* Hence that ſame ſtrange queſtion of the Prophets, *Ierem.30. 6. Aske ye now, and ſee whether a man doth trauell with childe?* A ſtrange queſtion, what ſhould make the Prophet ask it? Becauſe he foreſaw ſuch ſtrange behauiour amongſt them, carrying themſelues in the ſame faſhion in the day of calamitie, that women vſe to do in the extremity of the pangs of child birth. *Wherefore doe I ſee euery man with his hands on his loynes as a woman in trauell, and all faces are turned into paleneſſe? Alas, for that day is great, ſo that none is like it, it is euen the time of Iacobs trouble.* When ſuch wofull dayes befall a man, all his riches will not yeeld him a iot of comfort, *Pro.11.4. Riches auaile not in the day of wrath.* No, that will no whit cheere a man at ſuch a time, *They ſhall*

ſhall caſt their ſiluer in the ſtreets, and their gold ſhall be remoued, &c. Ezek.7. 19. This ſhal be the miſerable pickle a man ſhall bee in at ſuch a time, that wants a good Conſcience.

But now looke vpon a man with a good Conſcience in ſuch times, and how fares it with him? Let euil tydings & times come, how is he affected therwithall? *He will not be affraid of euill tydings, for his heart is fixed, Pſal.* 112.7. feare he may, but yet his Heart ſhal be free from thoſe reſtleſſe, & perplexing diſtractions, wherewith all others are vexed, *Luke* 22.9. *When ye ſhall heare of warres and commotions, be not terrified.* And *Prou.*3.25. *Be not afraid of ſudden feare.* There is nothing ſo armes & reſolues the heart againſt feares and euil tydings, as doth the peace and integrity of a good Conſcience. For let there be outward peace abroad in the world and freedome from all feares of wars and combuſtions, yet little ioy and cõfort can a man haue therin, whileſt his conſcience proclaimes warre againſt

him, and as Gods Herald ſummons him to battel. Thoſe inward warres, and rumours of wars, wofully diſtract him, in the midſt of his outward peace. So contrarily let there be peace within in the Conſcience, and all wars, and feares of warres huſht there, and then what euer feares and troubles are like to be without, yet there will bee a calme, a ſerenity, and a ſweet ſecuritie within.

Be carefull, and ſo fearefull, *for nothing*, *Phil.* 4. 6. To be fearefull in nothing, is indeed an excellent happineſſe of a well compoſed mind. How might one attain thereto? How might a man bring his heart to that fixed and ſtabliſht temper? See *verſe* 7. *The peace of God that paſſes all vnderſtanding ſhall* guarde *your hearts and mindes*, φρουρήσει, ſhal keepe with a guard, as Kings haue their guards about them, to ſaue their perſons from violence; ſhall guard your *hearts*, that is, your affections, that they run not into extremities of impatience, diſtraction, deſperation, when

when feares and terrors ſhall come, ye ſhall not be tranſported with ſuch diſtracting thoughts as ſhall depriue you of the freedome of your mindes, but that you ſhall haue them to attend vpon God in the greateſt of your dãgers. So that a man with a good conſcience in the middeſt of all feares and combuſtions can ſing with *Dauid, Pſal.* 116 7. *Returne vnto thy reſt, O my ſoule.* The peace of a good conſcience is like the ballaſt of a ſhip. Let a ſhip goe to Sea without ballaſt in the bottome, and euery blaſt of winde is ready to ouerturne it, but being wel balaſted, though the winds blow ſtrong, yet it ſayles ſteddily and ſafely. Euery blaſt of ill newes, and tidings of feare, how full of terrible apprehenſions it fills an ill conſcience, it miſerably vnſettles and diſtracts it, whileſt a good conſcience, what blaſts ſoeuer blow, hath its hart ſteddy and at good command.

Me thinkes when I conſider *Noah* in his Cabbine, or neſt in the Ark, with what ſecurity and quiet of heart he ſits

here notwithſtanding the clattering of the raines vpon the Ark, the roaring of the waters, and the hideous howlings and out-cryes of thoſe that were drownde in the flood, I ſee the Embleme of a good conſcience. *Tubalcain, Lamech, Iabal, Iubal,* with what horrid perplexities are their ſoules diſtraught. Some climbe vp this houſe top, ſome this high tree, others flee to ſome high mountaine, and there in what horror and amazement are they, whileſt one ſees his Children ſprawling, another his wife ſtrugling for life vpon the face of the mercileſſe waters, but eſpecially whileſt they behold the waters riſing by little and little, and purſuing them to the houſe tops, and threatning to ſweepe them off from the heads of the Mountaines, to which they had betaken themſelues. Theſe feares and amazements were worſe then an hundreth deaths. But now all this while how is it with *Noah*, he ſits dry in his cabbin, and literally was the ſaying of the Pſalme verified of him, *Surely in the*

the floods of great waters they came not nigh vnto him, *Pſ.* 32.6. He hath his ark *pitcht within*, & *pitcht without*, neither can the raines from aboue beat in, nor the waters from beneath leake in, let all *fountaines of the great deepe bee broken vp*, *and the flood-gates of heauen bee opened*, yet not one drop of water comes at him, and though the waters preuaile fifteene Cubits aboue the high hils and mountaines, ſo that they bee couered, yet *Noah* hee is out of all feare, let them riſe as high as they will, yet ſhall hee keepe aboue them ſtill. Iuſt ſuch is the condition, and happineſſe of a man with a good Conſcience in ſad times. Whileſt the high hils and mountaines are couered, the great and braue ſpirits of the world are ouerwhelmed with feare, are poſſeſt with dreadfull apprehenſions, ſo as they know not which way to look, nor which way to take, euen then a man with a good conſcience hath a ſtrange quiet of heart, is full of ſweet ſecurity and reſolution, & amids all the ſhrikes how

howlings, and wringing of hands of earthly men, by patience poſſeſſes his ſoule, is maſter of himſelfe, and compoſes his ſoule to reſt. His Ark is pitcht within & without. The peace of God, and the peace of a good Conſcience, keeps the water-floods from comming into his ſoule. The raine and the waues they beate vpon the Arke, but yet they pierced it not. A man with a good conſcience may fall into, & may be ſwept away with cõmon calamities: yet how euer it fare with his outward man, yet his ſoule is free from that horrour, and thoſe madding perplexities wherwith all wicked ones are ouertaken. The peace of a good Conſcience ſhall keep off theſe diſtracting feares from his minde. Though he cannot be free happely from the *common deſtructions*, yet ſhall he be free from the *common diſtractiõs* of the world. There be two things in common calamities, *The ſword without, & terror within*, Deut. 32.25. & the latter of the two, is the worſe by farre. Now here is the benefit of a good cõſcience,

ſcience, though it doe not ſaue alwaies from the *ſword without*, yet it deliuers alwayes from the *terror within*, which giues a terrible edge to the ſword, and which being remoued, the ſword is nothing ſo terrible. Whē the Canaanites were deſtroyed by Iſrael, there was a double ſorrow and ſmart vpon them. The *ſword* of the Iſraelite, and Gods *Hornet*, *Ioſhua* 24.12. What was that *Hornet*? Nothing elſe but that diſtracting and perplexing feare and terror wherewith God filled their hearts, as appeares, *Exodus* 23.27, 28. There is no *Hornet* can ſo vexe with his ſting, as theſe terrors vexe euill conſciences in euill dayes. Now here is the priuiledge of good Conſciences, though they may ſmart with the ſword, yet the *Hornet* ſhall not ſting them, nor fill their hearts with that throbbing anguiſh, that theſe terrors in times of calamitie put euill Conſciences to.

A ſweet motiue to make any in loue with a good Conſcience. Whileſt we looke vpon the euils of the times, wee cannot

cannot but looke for euill times. Look we vpon our ſinnes, and Gods adminiſtration abroad; vpon the malice and policies of the aduerſaries of Gods grace, and what doe theſe but prognoſticate heauy things. Now ſuppoſe a flood ſhould come, would we not be glad of an Arke, & ſuch a cabbin therein as ſhould keepe out the waters from our ſoules? Get then the pitch of a good Conſcience, & thou ſhalt ſit like *Noah*, if not free from the waters, yet free from the feares of *Lamech*, & *Tubalcain*, which are worſe then the waters. For the feares of ſuch euils are more bitter and vnſufferable then the euils thẽſelues. Suppoſe, I ſay, a flood ſhould come, who would not giue a kingdome for an Arke well pitcht? Suppoſe calamitie ſhould come, who would not giue a world for a good Conſcience then? *Iabel*, *Gen.* 4. 20. he is buſie in building of tents, and he is among his flocks and cattell, and *Iubal*, *Gen.* 4. 21. he is wholly vpon his merry pins, as his Harpe and Organs; He and his

his take *the Timbrel, and the Harpe, and reioyce at the ſound of the Organ, Iob* 21. 12. And theſe iolly iouiall lads giue poore *Noah* many a drie flout, many a ſcornefull ſcoffe whileſt he is building his Arke, and aske what this brainſicke and mad fellow meanes to make ſuch a veſſell, whether hee meant to ſaile on the dry land, or to make a ſea when he had made his ſhip? I, but whē the flood is come, and the waters begin to bee chin deepe, then aske *Iabel* whether building of tents or building of an Ark be the wiſer worke, then whether is better *Noahs* Arke, or *Iubals* Pipes? Now that the flood is come, and theſe come perhaps wading middle deep to the Arke ſide, & bellow and howle to *Noah* to open the Arke to them: Now would not *Iabel* giue all his tents, and all his cattell, but to bee where *Noahs* dog lyes, would not *Iubal* now giue all his pipes and merriment, to haue but the place that an hogge had in the Arke. Now *Iubal* let vs heare one of your merry Songs,

pipe

pipe now and make your ſelfe merry with gybing at *Noahs* folly, in making a Ship to ſayle on drie land. What ayleſt thou *Iubal* to howle and wring thine hands thus? where is thine Harp & Orgãs now? cheer vp thy ſoule now with theſe vanities. Now the flood is come, now *Noah* is in the Arke, now Sirs, you that are ſuch *men of renowne*, *Gen.6.4.* you that were the braue gallants of the earth, now tell me, who is the foole, & who is the wiſe man now?

How many in the dayes of peace make light of a good Conſcience, yea if they ſee others to be but carefull in rigging of thir Shippe, and pitching, and trimming vp ſuch an Arke, how ready are they to ſpend their byting ſcoffes, and their tart ieſts vpon them, but if euer times of trouble & calamity, & a fire-flood of Gods wrath *Nah.* 1.6,8. ſhould breake in, then would a good cõſcience hold vp the head with much comfort and reſolution, whileſt thoſe that formerly made a ieaſt of a good Conſcience, ſhould haue aking, and

and quaking hearts, by reaſon of thoſe vnmeaſurable fears that ſhall ſeize vpon them. A good Conſcience will make a man muſick; when *Iubal* ſhal be glad not onely to put vp, but with indignation & anguiſh of heart to throw away and curſe his pipes. Well fare a good conſcience in euill dayes. Pitch and trim vp this Arke, there is no ſuch prouiſion againſt euill dayes, as is a good conſcience. It will doe a man ſeruice, and ſupport him, when all the braue ſpirits of the earth ſhal be blank, and at their wits end.

3 The comfort of a good conſcience in time of Sickneſſe.

In the third place, the benefit and comfort of a good Conſcience, is conſpicuous in the time of ſickneſſe, or a mans priuate and perſonall croſſes in his eſtate, &c. A ſicke man with an hayle Conſcience, is a cheary and a comfortable man, *Pro.* 13. 14. *The ſpirit of a man will ſuſteine his infirmity*; that is, the ſpirit it ſelfe being hayle, and ſound, it will enable him to beare any bodily ſicknes. *But a wounded ſpirit who can beare*; yea a wounded or a ſicke bo-

dy,

dy, who can cõfortably bear, if the ſpirit or Conſcience be ſicke? But let the conſcience be good and ſound, and it helps a man with great eaſe and comfort, to beare the ſicknes of the body. It is a ſhrewd burden to beare two ſickneſſes at once, to haue a ſick body, & a ſick cõſcience. A man ſhal find enough of the eaſieſt of them ſingle and alone. But yet an hayle conſcience in an infirme body, ſweetly helps our infirmitie. Let a man haue euer ſo hayle and healthfull a body, yet if the conſcience be naught, & withall awakened, fals to galling & griping, he ſhall find but little ioy in his bodily health; ſo contrarily, let a mans Conſcience be good; and though his body be ſick & weake, yet it is a great deale of ſweet refreſhment that it ſhal receiue from the cõſcience.

Sickneſſe in it ſelfe is exceeding vncomfortable, and in the time of ſicknes commonly all bodily comforts, the comforts of meats, drinkes, and ſleepe, fayle, yea but then here is the benefit of a good conſcience, that wil not then fayle,

fayle, but as it is ſaid, *Eccl.* 10.9. *Money anſwers all things*, ſo a good conſcience anſwers all things, the comfort of it ſupplies the wants of all other comforts. When in ſicknes the comfort of meate, drinke, and ſleepe is gone, they are all found againe in the comfort of a good Conſcience, that will be meat, drinke, that will be reſt and ſleep, that will make a mans ſick-bed ſoft, and eaſie, that ſhall be as the Angels were to Chriſt in his hunger in the Wildernes, *they miniſtred vnto him*, and ſo will a good Conſcience miniſter comfort in the want of all other comforts, ſo that a man may ſay of a good Conſcience, as we vſe to ſay of ſome ſolid, ſubſtantial diſh, that there are Partridge, Phesants and Quailes in it; ſo though outward comforts ceaſe their office, and their worke be ſuſpended, yet a good Conſcience comes in its roome, and in it are meat, drinke, ſleepe, eaſe, refreſhment, and what not? A good conſcience is an Electuary, or a Cordiall that hath all theſe ingredients in it. There

is no ſuch Cordiall to a ſick man, as the Cordial of a good Conſcience. Al Phyſitians to this Phyſitian are but ſuch Phyſitians as *Iobs* friends, *Iob* 13. 4. *Yee are Phyſitians of no value.* A motiue of great waight to make men in loue with a good conſcience. Who can be free from ſickneſſe, & how tedious and wearifome a time is the time of ſickneſſe? Now who would not make much of a Cordiall that might cheare him then, of a receipt that might feed him then? As then we would be glad of a chearfull and comfortable ſpirit vpon our ſick beds, ſo make much of a good Conſcience. Whence is it that moſt men in their ſickneſſes haue ſuch drooping ſpirits, lye groaning altogether vnder their bodily paines, or lye ſottiſhly and ſenſeleſly, no ſenſe of any thing but paine and ſickneſſe? Meerly from the want of a good Conſcience, they haue laid vp no Cordial, no comfortable Electuary for themſelues in their health time againſt the day of ſicknes. Indeed you ſhall haue the miſerable

ſerable cõforters of the world on this maner chearing them; Why, how now man, where is your heart? Plucke vp a good heart man, neuer feare for a little ſickneſſe, &c. True indeed, they ſhould not need to feare, if they could plucke vp a good heart. But they that will pluck it vp when they are ſick, muſt lay it vp when they are well. He that hath a good conſcience to get when he lyes vpõ his ſick-bed, is like a man that hath his *Aqua vitæ* to buy when he is fallen into a ſwoune; A wiſe man that feares ſwouning, would haue his hot-water-bottle hanging alwayes ready at his beds-head. But as in other croſſes by ſickneſs and the like, ſo is the comfort of a good conſcience, neuer more ſweet, then when a man is vnder the croſſe for conſcience ſake, & ſuffers affliction and vexation to keepe a good conſcience. Then aboue all other times will conſcience doe the office of a Cõforter, and will ſtand to him that will ſtand for it. When *Nebuchadnezzar* heates his Fornace ſeauen times hotter

then at other times, then a good Conſcience will ſpeake comfort ſeuen times ſweeter then at other times.

Are Gods Saints for good Conſcience ſake in priſon? Good Conſcience wil make their priſons delectable hortiards. So doth *Algerius* an Italian Martyr date a comfortable Epiſtle of his, *From the delectable hortyard of the Leonine priſon*, a priſon in Venice ſo called. So that as he ſaid, that he had rather be in priſon with *Cato*, then with *Cæſar* in the Senate houſe, ſo in this regard it was more comfortable to be with *Philpot* in the Coale-houſe, then with *Bonner*, in his Pallace. *Bonners* Conſcience made his Pallace a Cole-houſe, and a Dungeon, whilſt *Philpots* made the Cole-houſe a Pallace.

Fox Acts and Mon. *Omnis nobis vilis eſt pœna, vbi pura comes eſt conſcientia. Tibart. apud Baron. An. 168.*

Are Gods Saints in the Stocks? *Better it is*, ſayes *Philpot*, *to ſit in the Stocks of the world, then in the ſtockes of a damnable Conſcience.* Therefore though they be in the Stockes, yet euen then, *the righteous doth ſing and reioyce*, yea, euen in the Stockes, and priſon; *Paul* and

and *Silas* ſang in the Stockes. Sing in the Stockes? Nay more; they can ſing in the flames, and in the midſt of the fires. *Iſ.* 24. 15. *Glorifie God in the fires.* And worthy *Hawkes* could clap his hands in the middeſt of the flames. So great and ſo paſſing all vnderſtanding is the peace & comfort of a good conſcience. So that in ſome ſenſe that may be ſaid of it which is ſpoken of faith, *Heb.* 11. 34. By it *they quenched the violence of fire.* Gods ſeruants were ſo rapt; & rauiſht with the ſenſe of Gods loue, and their inward peace of Conſcience, that they ſeem'd to haue a kind of happy dedolency, and want of feeling of the ſmart of outward torments.

Hinc eſt quod à contrario innocens etiam inter ipſa tormenta fruitur Cõſcientiæ ſecuritate, et cum de pœna metuat de innocentia gloriatur. Hierony. ad Demetri ad ep. 1.

Who knowes what trialls God may bring him to? We haue no patent for our peace, nor his free libertie in the profeſſion of the Goſpell. Suppoſe we ſhould be cald to the ſtake for Chriſts ſake. Would we be chearefull, would we ſing in the flames? Get a good Cõſcience. The cauſe of Chriſt is a good cauſe, now with a good cauſe get a ſtout

good conſcience, and we ſhall be able with all cheerfulnes to lay downe our liues for Chriſt, and his Goſpell ſake.

Chap. XII.

The comfort and benefit of a good Conſcience in the dayes of Death & Iudgement.

4 The comfort of a good Conſcience at the day of Death.

IN the fourth place, The time of death is a time wherin in the benefit and comfort of a good Conſcience is exceeding great. Death hath a ghaſtly looke and terrible, able to daunt the proudeſt & braueſt ſpirit in the world, but then hath it a ghaſtly looke indeed when it faces an euill conſcience. Indeed ſometimes, and moſt commonly, Conſcience in many, is ſecure at the time of death. God in his iuſtice, ſo plaging an affected ſecurity in life, with an inflicted ſecuritie at Death. And the Lord ſeemes to ſay as once to the Prophet, Goe make their Conſciences aſleep at their death, as they haue made it aſleep all their life, leſt Conſcience

ſhould

ſhould ſee and ſpeake, and they heare, and be ſaued. God deales with conſcience as with the Prophet, *Ezek.* 3.26. *I will make thy tongue cleaue to the roof of thy mouth, that thou ſhalt be dumbe*; therfore they die, though not deſperately as *Saul*, and *Achitophel*, yet ſottiſhly without comfort, and feeling of Gods loue as *Nabal*. But if conſcience bee awakened, and haue its eies, and mouth opened, no heart can imagine the deſperate and vnſufferable diſtreſſes of ſuch an heart, *Terrours take hold of him as waters, Iob* 27.20. *Terrours make him afraid on euery ſide, Iob* 18.11. Then is that true, *Iob* 25.23,24. *He knowes that the day of darkneſſe is ready at hand. Trouble & anguiſh ſhall make him afraid, they ſhal preuaile againſt him, as a King ready to the battell.* And no wonder, for he is now brought vnto the *King of Terrours*, as Death is called, *Iob* 18.14. A man that hath an ill Conſcience, if his eyes be opened, and his Conſcience awakened, he ſees death in all the terrible ſhapes that may bee. Some-

times hee ſees death comming like a mercileſſe Officer, and a cruell Sergeant, to arreſt, and to drag him by the throat to the priſon and place of Torment, *Pſal.* 55.15. *Let death ſeize vpon them.* They ſee it comming like that cruell ſeruant in the Parable to his fellow, *Math.*18. catching them by the very throat.

Sometimes he ſees death in the ſhape of ſome greedy Lyõ, or ſome rauening Wolfe ready to deuour him, & to feed vpon his carkaſe, *Pſ.*49.14. *Death ſhall feed on them*, euen as a rauenous beaſt ſhall feed vpon his prey. Imagine in what a terrible plight the *Samaritans* were in when the Lyons ſet vpon thẽ, 2 *Kin.*17. & by it imagine in what caſe an ill Conſcience is, when it beholds the face of death. It puts an ill conſcience into that caſe in good earneſt that *Dauid* was in, in the caſe of trial, *Pſ.*55. 4.5. *My heart is ſore pained within me, & the terrors of death are fallen vpon mee, fearfulneſſe and trembling are come vpon me, and horror hath ouerwhelmed me.*

Some-

Sometimes again he ſees death as the *Iſraelites* the fiery ſerpents with mortal ſtings; Sometimes as a mercileſs landlord, or the Sheriffe comming with a Writ of *Firma eiectione*, to throw him out of houſe and home, and to turne him to the wide Common; yea he ſees death as Gods executioner & meſſenger of eternal death, yea, he ſees death with as much horror as if hee ſaw the Deuill. In ſo many fearfull ſhapes appeares death to an euill conſcience vpon the death-bed. So as it is indeed the *King of terrors* to ſuch an one that hath the terrours of Conſcience within. There is no one thought ſo terrible to ſuch an one, as the thought of death, nothing that he more wiſhes to auoid. Oh! how loath, and how vnwilling is ſuch an one to die.

But come now to a man that hath liued as *Paul* did in all good conſcience, and how is it with him vpon his death-bed? His end is peace; ſo full of ioy and comfort; ſo is he ratiſhed with the inward and vnſpeakable conſolations of his

his Conſcience, that it is no wonder at all that *Balaam* ſhould wiſh to dye the death of the righteous, the death of a man with a good Conſcience.

The day of a mans mariage, *is the day of the ioy* of a mans *heart*, *Can.* 3.11. and the day of mariage is not ſo ioyfull a day, as is the day of death to a good Conſcience. There are but few that can marry with that ioy wherewith a good Conſcience dies.

It enables a man not onely to looke *Ananias* and the Counſell in the face, but euen to looke death it ſelfe in the face, without thoſe amazing terrours, yea, it makes the face of Death ſeeme louely, and amiable. He whoſe conſcience is good, and ſees the face of God reconciled to him in Chriſt, he can ſay as *Iacob* did when he ſaw the face of *Ioſeph*, *Gen.* 46 30. *Now let me dye, ſince I haue ſeene thy face.* It is the priuiledge of a good cõſcience alone, to go to the graue, as *Agag* did to *Samuel*, and to ſay that truly, which he ſpake beſides the book, 1 *Sam.* 15. 32. *He came pleaſantly,*

and

And he ſaid, Surely the bitternes of death is paſt. He was deceiued, and therefore had no ſuch cauſe to be ſo pleaſant, but a good Conſcience can, yea, cannot chuſe but be ſo pleaſant, euen when going out of the world, becauſe the guilt of ſinne being waſhed away in Chriſts blood, it knowes that the bitterneſs of death is paſt and the ſweetneſſe of life eternall is at hand.

A man whoſe debts are paid, he dares goe out of doores, dare meet and face the Sergeants, and the conſcience purged by the blood of Chriſt, can looke as vndaunredly on the face of death. He that hath gotten the ſting, that is, the guilt of conſcience, taken away by faith in Chriſt, he lookes not vpon death as the *Iſraelites* vpon the fiery Serpents, but looks vpon it as *Paul* doth, 1 *Cor.* 15. *O death where is thy ſting?* Who feares a Bee, an Hornet, a Snake, or a Serpent, when they haue loſt their ſting. The guilt of ſinne is the ſting of Conſcience, is the ſting of death that ſtings the conſcience. *The ſting of death*

is

is sinne. 1 *Cor.* 15. Plucke then sinne out of the conscience, and at once the conscience is made good, and death made weake, and disarmed of his weapon. And when the cõscience sees death vnstinged & disarmed, it is freed of feare, and euen in the very act of death, can ioyfully triumph ouer death, oh Death where is thy sting?

A good Conscience lookes vpon death, as vpon the Sheriffe that comes to giue him possession of his Inheritance, or as *Lazarus* vpon the Angels that came to carry his soule into *Abrahams* bosome, and therefore can welcome death, and entertaine him ioyfully. And wheras an ill conscience makes a man see death as if he saw the Deuill, a good conscience makes a man see the face of death, as *Iacob* saw *Esaus* face, *Gen.* 33. *I haue seene thy face, as the face of God*; they see the face of death with vnspeakeable ioy, rauishment of heart and exultation of spirit.

Well now, what a motiue haue we here, to make vs labour for good conscience.

ſcience. Euen *Balaam* himſelfe would faine make a good end, & die in peace, and who wiſhes not his death-bed may be a Mount *Nebo*, from whence he may ſee the heauenly *Canaan*? Lo here, *Balaam*, the way to dye the death of the righteous, *I haue liued in all good Conſcience vnto this day*. They that haue conſcience in their life, ſhal haue comfort, at their death; They that liue conſcionably, ſhall die comfortably, They that liue in all good conſcience till their dying day, ſhall depart in the abundance of comfort a their dying day.

There will come a day wherein we muſt lay downe theſe Tabernacles, the day of death will aſſuredly come. How lamentable a thing wil it then be, to be ſo deſtitute, & deſolate of all comfort, as to be driuen to that extremity, as to curſe our birth day? oh! what would Comfort be worth at our laſt houre, at our laſt gaſpe, whilſt our deareſt friēds ſhall be weeping, wringing their hands and lamenting, then, then what would inward cōfort be worth? Who would not

not hold the whole world an eaſie price for it then? Well then, would we then haue Cõfort and Ioy, oh then get a good cõſcience now, which wil yeeld comfort, when all other comforts ſhall vtterly faile, & ſhall be life in the middeſt of death. How happy is that man, that when the ſentence of death is paſſed vpon him, can ſay with *Hezekiah*, *Iſ.* 38.3. *Remember now O Lord, I beſeech thee, how I haue walked before thee in truth & with a perfect heart, & haue done that which is good in thy ſight.* Indeed the text ſayes, that *Hezekiah* wept ſore, but yet, not as fearing death, for hee could not feare death, who had thus feared God, but becauſe the promiſe was not yet made good to him in a ſon & Heire of his kingdome, hence came thoſe teares. It is otherwiſe an vnſpeakable ioy, that ſuch a Conſcience as *Hezekiahs* was, will ſpeake to a man vpon his death-bed.

Euery one profeſſes a deſire to make a good end: Here is the way to make good that deſire, to liue in all good cõſcience.

ſcience. Alas how pitifull, and miſerable a condition liue moſt men in. All the dayes of their life and health, they haue no regard of a good Conſcience. Notwithſtanding that men are preſſed continually to this one care, by the inſtancy and importunity of Gods miniſters, yet how miſerably is it neglected? Wel, at laſt the day of death comes, & then what would not they giue for a comfortable end? If the gold of Ophir would purchaſe comfort, it ſhould flie then. Then poaſt for this Miniſter, & runne for the other, as in the ſweating ſickneſſe in King *Edwards* dayes, then for Gods ſake but one word of cõfort, then O bleſſed men of God, one word of peace. Now alas what would you haue them doe? Are they, or your own courſes in fault, that you want comfort at your death? What would you haue vs doe? Wee muſt referre you to your owne Conſciences, wee cannot make oyle of flint, nor cruſh ſweet Wine out of ſowre Grapes, we dare not flatter you againſt your conſcien-

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ces. If you would giue vs a world, wee cannot comfort you when your owne conſciences witneſſe againſt you, that ſuch comforts belong not to you. Doe no idely in this caſe hope for comfort from Miniſters, be it known vn to you, you muſt haue it from your owne conſciences. Many on their death-bedde cry to the Miniſter, as ſhe did to the King, 2 *King.* 6. 26, 27. *Helpe my Lord O King.* But marke what hee anſwers, *If the Lord doe not helpe thee, whence ſhall I helpe thee, out of the barne floore, or out of the Wine preſſe?* So muſt we anſwere to ſuch as cry, Helpe, helpe, O man of God: If God and your owne conſciences helpe you not, whence ſhall we helpe you? If there had beene Corne within the barnes, the King could eaſily haue helped her, but he could not make corne: So if men haue carryed any thing into their conſciences, if they themſelues haue inned any prouiſion and comfort, by being conſcionable in their liues, then we can helpe & comfort

fort them, but otherwiſe do not thinke that we can make comforts, and make good Conſciences vpon your death-beds. If your conſciences can ſay for you, that you haue bin carefull in your life time to know God, to walke holily & religiouſly before him, &c. then we dare be bold to comfort & cheere you, then dare we ſpeake peace confidently to you. But if your conſciences accuſe you of your ignorance, your oathes, Sabbath breaches, worldlineſſe, rebellion, vncleanneſſe, oppreſſion, drunkenneſſe, &c. and finally, impenitency: What is it you would haue vs to doe? What can we ſay, but as the Prophet to *Zedekiah, Ier.* 37. 19. *Where* are now *your prophets that propheſied vnto you, ſaying the King of Babylon ſhall not come againſt you?* So, where be thoſe that in your life time told you, ye need not be ſo carefull, and preciſe to keepe good conſciences, leſſe adoe will ſerue the turne, *now* what thinke yee of them? *now* what peace haue you in thoſe wayes, what comfort can theſe giue you *now*?

Or elſe what can we ſay when men in anguiſh of conſcience lye toſſing vpon their beds, but what *Reuben* ſaid to his brethren when they were in diſtreſſe, *Gen.* 42.21.22. *Did not I warn you, ſaying, Sinnot, &c.* So muſt we, what doe ye call to vs for comfort, did not we warne you many a time & oft, ſaying, ſinne not, nor liue in thoſe dangerous courſes? Did not we warne you? Oh to haue our conſciences and Gods Miniſters thus to grate vpon vs, what an vncomfortable condition will this be? Would we then preuent ſuch ſorrow, and be cheerfull, and cheered at our latter ends, lay vp a good conſcience. then, lay in ſomewhat for conſcience, and Gods Miniſters to worke vpon, & from which they both may bee able to raiſe comfort to you. Get a good Conſcience, and liue in it all thy daies, and then though thou ſhouldeſt want the benefit of a comforting Miniſter, yet thy conſcience ſhall doe the office of a comforting Miniſter, and ſhall be the ſame vnto thee that the Angel was

vnto

vnto Chriſt in his agony, *Luke* 22. 43. and ſhall miniſter ſuch comfort vnto thee, as ſhall make thee ready to leape into the graue for ioy. This ſhall be as another *Iacobs* ſtaffe for thee to leane and reſt vpon, when thou ſhalt be vpon thy death-bed. If men knew but the worth of a good Conſcience at the houre of death, we ſhould need no other motiue to worke mens hearts to be in loue therewith.

5 The comfort of a good Conſcience at the day of Iudgment.

Fiftly and laſtly, the benefit and comfort of a good Conſcience is great at the day of iudgement. Oh the ſweet comfort and confidence of heart that a good Conſcience will yeeld vnto a man at that day. What will become of all the Gigantean ſpirits, & the braue fellowes of the earth then? Alas for their yellings, and curſing of themſelues, and their companions? What howling and crying to the mountains, as they did, *Reuel.* 6. *Hide* vs, *Couer* vs, yea, daſh and quaſh vs in a thouſand pieces. When an ill Conſcience is awakened, it is not to be imagined how

ſmall a thing will gaſtre it. *The ſound of a ſhaken leafe ſhall chaſe them, and they ſhall flye as flying from a ſword, and they ſhall fall when none purſues.* Leu. 26. 36. *A dreadfull ſound is in his eares,* Iob 15. 21. Ae heares nothing, but he thinkes he heares alwayes ſome terrible and dreadfull noyſe. And then if a ſhaken leafe ſhall chaſe, and ſhall put them into a ſhaking feare, what caſe will ſuch be in, when as *Iob* ſpeakes, *Iob* 26. 11. *The pillars of heauen ſhall tremble,* and when *the powers of heauen ſhall bee ſhaken, Luk.* 21. 26. When the heauens ſhal ſhake and flame aboue them, whē the earth ſhall quake, and tremble vnder them, what caſe will they be in then? If meere imaginations fill their eares with *dreadfull ſounds* where there is no ſound at all: Oh what a dreadfull ſound ſhall be in their eares when the *Sea ſhall roare, Luk.* 21. 25. when *the laſt trumpe ſhall ſound,* 1 *Cor.* 15. when they ſhall heare the *ſhout and voyce of an Angel,* 1 *Theſ.* 4. 16. what dreadful ſounds will theſe be in the eares of il Conſciences?

ences? How will these dreadful sounds confound their soules with horrour and amazement!

But now for a good conscience, how is it with it then? Euen amidst all these dreadfull sounds it *lookes vp*, & *lifts vp the head*, Luk. 21.28. and enables a man with a cheery confidence *to stand before the Sonne of man*, Luke 21.36.

The malefactor who lookes for the halter, how dreadfull is the iudges cõming to the Assises, attended with the troupes of halberds, in his eye; but the prisoner that knowes his owne innocency, and that he shal be quit and discharged, his heart leaps at the Iudges approach, how terrible soeuer he come attẽded to the bench, it glads his heart to see that day, which shall be the day of his liberty and release. *An hypocrite shall not come before him*, Iob. 13.16. much lesse, shal *looke vp*, & *lift vp his head*, or *stand before him*, Ps. 1.5. But the righteous, and the man with a good Conscience, he shall hold vp, and cheerefully lift vp his head, when all the surly,

and proud *Zamzammins* of the earth, that here lifted vp their heads and nebs so high, shall become howling and trembling suitors to the deafe mountaines to hide them from the presence of the Lambe on the throne. Oh! they that feare the Lambe on the throne, how dreadfull vnto them will be the Lyon on the throne?

It will be with good and euill consciences in that day as it was with *Pharaohs* Butler, and Baker on *Pharaohs* birth-day. The Butler hee knew hee should be restored to honour, and goe from the prison to the Pallace, therefore he comes out of the prison full of ioy, and iollitie, he holds vp his head, and outfaces the proudest of his enemies. But the Baker hee knowes his head shall be lift from off him, and therefore when *Pharaohs* birth-day comes, wherein all others are in iollity, yet hee droopes and hangs downe the head, hee knowes it would proue an heauy day of reckoning with him.

Such will the apparition of Christ

vnto

vnto iudgement be, vnto good & euill conſciences, as was the apparition of the Angell, *Math.* 28. 2. 3. 4. 5. *There was a great earthquake, for the Angell of the Lord deſcended from heauen, his countenance was like lightning, and his rayment white as ſnow.* Here was a terrible ſight, but yet not alike terrible to all the beholders. For, *for feare of him the keepers did ſhake, & became like dead men.* But the *Angel ſaid vnto the woman, feare not ye, for I know that ye ſeeke Ieſus.* So at the laſt day when Chriſt ſhall come to iudgement, euill conſciences ſhall bee as the Keepers, whileſt all good Conſciences ſhall heare that comfortable voyce, *Feare not yee,* for I know that you haue fought for God, and all your daies ye haue fought to keepe a good Conſcience. How effectuall a motiue ſhould this bee, how ſtrongly ſhould this worke with vs. As wee ſhould bee glad to hold vp our heads, when the glorious ones of the earth ſhall hang them downe, to leape for ioy, when others ſhall howle for bitter

anguiſh of ſpirit, ſo now whileſt wee haue the day of life and grace, labour wee to get and keepe good Conſciences.

Chap. XIII.

A ſecond Motiue, A good Conſcience, is a continuall feaſt.

The ſecond motiue to a good cõſcience.

THus haue wee ſeene the firſt motiue, from the benefit and comfort of a good Conſcience, in ſuch caſes, and times, as a man ſtands moſt in need of comfort. *A ſecond motiue* followes, and that is that we finde, *Prou.* 15.15. *A good Conſcience is a continuall feaſt.* 1. It is a *feaſt.* 2. *Better* then a feaſt: It is a *continuall* feaſt.

1. *It is a feaſt.* The excellency of a good Conſcience is ſet forth by the ſame thing, by which our Sauiour ſets forth the happineſſe of heauen, *Luk.* 14. And well may both be ſet forth by the ſame metaphor, conſidering what a neere affinite there is betweene heauen and

Quo enim melius epulantur animi quam bonis factis? aut quid

and a good Conſcience, and that there is no feaſting in heauen, vnleſſe there be firſt the feaſt of a good conſcience here on earth. But why a *feaſt*? A feaſt for three regards.

1. For the *ſelfe ſufficiency*, and ſweet *ſatisfaction* and *contentment* that a good Conſcience hath within it ſelfe. Feaſting & faſting are oppſite. In faſting vpõ the want of food there is an emptineſſe and a griping hunger, which makes the body inſatiably to craue. But at a feaſt there is abundance, and variety of all diſhes & dainties, ready at hand to ſatisfie a mans appetie to the full, he can haue a mind to nothing but it is before him. The very beſt of euery thing that is to bee had is at a feaſt. *A feaſt of fat things, Iſa. 25. 6. of fat things full of marrow.* Such is the ſufficiency of ſatisfaction, the abundance of ſweetneſſe, and contentment that is to be found in a good Conſcience. It is a table richly furniſht with all varieties, and dainties. There is no pleaſure, cõfort, or contentment that a mans

aliud tam facile poteſt explere iuſtorum mentes quã boni operis conſcientia? Ambr de offic. l. 1. c. 31.

mans heart can wish, but it may bee abundantly had in a good Conscience; as at a feast there is a collection of all the daintie and delicacies that sea and land can afford.

2. For the *mirth* and *ioy* of it. *A feast is made for laughter, Eccles.* 10.19. At a feast there is mirth, muck, & delight in the comfortable vse of the creatures. Heauinesse of heart, pensiuenesse, and sorrow, these are banisht frō the house of feasting. Fasting & feasting are opposite, in fasting indeed there is weeping, mourning, and sorrowing; but in a feast contrarily, there is mirth, merriment and ioy.

There were vnder the Law appointed solemn holy feasts anniuersarily to be celebrated, & at those solemn feasts were the siluer Trumpets sounded, *Num.* 10.10. & the sound of the trumpets was a *ioyfull sound, Ps.* 89.15. For their festiuities were to be kept with speciall ioy, *Deut.* 16.10.11.13.14.15. *Thou shalt keepe* the feast *of weekes vnto the Lord, &c. and thou shalt* reioyce *before*

fore the Lord &c. Thou shalt obserue the feast of Tabernacles seuen dayes, &c. And thou shalt reioyce in thy feast, &c. Therefore thou shalt surely reioyce. And that extraordinary feast on the fourteenth and fifteenth of *Adar*, in memoriall of their deliuerance from *Hamã*, see how it was kept, *Esth.* 9. 19. 22. They kept them dayes of *gladnesse and feasting, of feasting and ioy.* Euen such is the excellency of a good Conscience. All the merriment and musicke, wine & good cheere, will not make a mans heart so light and so merry, as the wine which is drunke at the feast of a good conscience will doe. This takes away all heauinesse and sadnesse of spirit, and hath the like effects with, not all wine. It makes a man *forget his spirituall pouerty, and remember that misery no more*, *Pro.* 31. 7. Nay, as wine not onely takes away sadnes, but withall brings a hatred of gladnes with it, *Eccl.* 10. 19. *Wine that makes glad the heart of man* so doth this wine at this feast, *Psal.* 97. 11, 12. *Light is sowne for the righteous, and*

gladnesse

gladnes for the vpright in heart, Reioyce in the Lord ye righteous. None ſo glad an heart, as the vpright in heart. Nay, ſuch is the vigour and ſtrength of this wine, at this feaſt, that it not only glads a mans heart, but makes a man as not able to containe, euen to ſhout for ioy; *Pſal.* 32. 11. *Shout for ioy all yee that are vpright in heart*, yea *ſhout aloud for ioy*; *Pſal.* 132. 16. That looke as it is ſaid of the Lord, *Pſalm.* 78. 65. *The Lord awaked like a mightie man that ſhouts by reaſon of wine.* So ſuch is the plenty, abundance, ſweetneſſe, and ſtrength of the wine of this feaſt, that it makes men in a holy iollitie, euen to break forth into ſhouting, & ſinging. This wine being liberally drunken, wherein there is no exceſſe, fils a mans heart with ſuch an ouerflowing exuberancy of ioy, as hee cannot hold, but he muſt needs ſhew it in Pſalms, Hymnes, & ſpirituall ſongs, and hence it is that *the righteous do ſing and reioyce*, *Pro.* 29. 6. So that what ioy a feaſt can yeeld, that can a good Conſcience yeeld much more; 2 *Cor.* 1. 12.

This

This is our reioycing *the teſtimony of our Conſcience.* Yea and that ioy commanded, *Deut.* 16. at the feaſt of Tabernacles what was it, but a type of that ſpirituall ioy, that the faithfull vnder Chriſt ſhould haue in keeping the feaſt of a good conſcience? The feaſt of a good conſcience is the true feaſt of Tabernacles, in which as in the other, there ſhall need no charge to reioyce, and be merry, this feaſt will put ſuch ſpirit and life into a man, as ſhal make him ſing, skip, and ſhout for ioy.

The feaſt of a good conſcience is not like a funerall feaſt, where mirth and ioy are vnſeemely, and vnſeaſonable gueſts, there are heauy hearts & looks, teares, and mourning, (which by the way how well they ſuit with feaſting let the world iudge) but the feaſt of a good Conſcience is a nuptiall feaſt, a marriage feaſt, and the day of marriage is *the day of the ioy of a mans heart*, *Cant.* 3. 11. Such a feaſt, euen a ioyfull marriage feaſt doth a good conſcience make.

Often-

Oftentimes theſe bodily feaſts are but heauy feaſts, many for all their good cheere, company, and muſicke, cannot put away the heauines of their hearts, but euen in their feaſt are ſad hearted, and *Sampſons* wife *wept* all the dayes of the feaſt, *Iudges* 14. 17. yea though a marriage feaſt. But in this feaſt of a good Conſcience here is no ſorrow, heauineſs, or ſad melancholly, but all ioy and gladneſſe.

3. For the *ſociety* & *company*. A feaſt is a collection, and a conuention of many good friends together, whoſe ſociety and friendſhip is ſweet each to other. There is no feaſt can afford the like company that a good Conſcience hath. *Woe to him that is alone*, *Eccleſ.* 4. that is the woefull and ſolitary condition of euill conſciences. But a good conſcience hath euer good company, *is not alone*, for the Father is with him, *Ioh.* 16. 23. yea, the Sonne is with it: & Chriſt, and the man with a good conſcience, they *ſuppe*, and *feaſt* together, *Reu.* 3. 20. yea, and the Spirit is with it.

1 *Cor.*

1 Cor. 13. 13. *The Communion of the holy Ghoſt be with you.* What feaſt in the world can ſhew ſuch company? And good company is the chiefe thing in a feaſt. Thus a good conſcience is a feaſt.

2. It is *better* then a feaſt. And that in three regards,

1. In regard of the *continuance* and *perpetuity* of it, *A continuall feaſt.* *Nabal* made a feaſt, a feaſt like a King, 1 *Sam.* 25. but that feaſt laſted but one day. *Sampſon* at his mariage had a feaſt that laſted ſeuen dayes, *Iudg.* 14. 17. but yet that feaſt had an end. *Ahaſhuerоſh* his feaſt was the longeſt feaſt that euer we reade of, *Eſth*, 1. 4. *He made a feaſt many dayes, an hundred and foureſcore dayes.* But yet *verſ.* 5. it is ſaid, *And when thoſe dayes were expired.* So this long feaſt had an end. It was continued for many daies, but yet no continuall feaſt, it had an end. The feaſt of a good conſcience is not like an *Vniuerſity* Commencement feaſt. Great exceedings, & extraordinary good cheere and company for one night, but the next mor-

now to their bare Commons againe. Not like the *feast* of the *Nativity*, at which time there is great feasting, and great cheere euery where for twelue dayes, but when those dayes are ouer, many a man is glad of bread & cheese, glad to skip at a crust. But this is a continuall feast all the year long, all a mans life long. Therefore 1 *Thes.* 5. 16. *Reioyce euermore*, keepe open house, and feasting all the yeare long. The ioy of a good Conscience was figured by the ioy at the feast of Tabernacles. That feast lasted seuen daies. The ioy must be as long. Seuen the number of perfection, denoted the whole course of a mans life, and so their seuen dayes ioy, the *continuall ioy* and iollity of this *continuall feast* of a good conscience.

Conscience and a wife, as they agree in many things, be they good, be they ill, so in this also. If the conscience be euill, it is like an *euill wife*, and she a *continuall euill*. *Pro.* 27. 15. *A continuall dropping in a very rainy day, and a contentious woman are alike.* The contentions of

of a wife are *a continuall dropping, Prou.* 19.13. A ſhrewiſh waſpiſh wife, ſ a continuall vexation & diſquiet. Such is an euill Conſcience, a continual ſorrow. Contrarily, a good Conſcience is like *a good wife*, a good wife is *a continuall comfort*, a comfort in health, in ſickneſſe, in peace, in diſtreſſe, *Pro.* 31. 12. *She doth him good and not euill* all the dayes *of her life*. Not ſome good and a great deale of euil withall, but al good, good and not euill. Not good at ſometime, and none at other times, *but all the dayes of her life*, ſhe is a continual comfort. So is the comfott of a good Conſcience. It keeps holy-day and feaſting euery day. It is al feaſt; a feaſt for euer; there is no *Lent*, nor *faſting* daies that interrupt this feaſt. This is the peculiar priuiledge of this feaſt to be cõtinual; belly-feaſting cannot be ſo: for 1. A man cannot alwaies feaſt though he would, a mans reuenues would bee exhauſt, his expenſes would ſoon ſink his eſtate. Continuall feaſting would ſoone begger & vndoe a man of good

eſtate, *Pro.21.17.He that loues Wine & Oyle ſhall not bee rich.* It is not ſo here; the reuenue of a good Conſcience is bottomleſs, it cannot be ſpent, & therfore is able to keepe a rich and a full furniſht Table all the yeare long. Here is a myſtery in this feaſt, the larger expences to day, the more laid in to keep the feaſt the better to morrow; a man growes rich by feaſting.

2. Suppoſe a man might be able to feaſt alwaies, or might feed at another mans Table continually, yet would it weary a man beyõd meaſure. It would but gugge and clov a man. All earthly pleaſures haue a ſatietie, and breed a loathing by frequent vſe. But this is the admirable excellency of this feaſt of a good Conſcience, here a man may feed and eate with continuall delight. At this continuall feaſt, here is a continual freſh appetite, and freſh delights; here is continuall feaſting without loathing and ſatiety.

Voluptas tunc cum maxime delectat extinguitur. Nec multũ loci habet ita̅q; cito implet & tædio eſt, & peſt primum impetum marcet. Senec. de vit. beat. cap 7.

3. Neither *may* belly feaſting be *continuall.* There be ſome times wherin it is

is inconuenient and vnlawfull. To ſpeake with the faireſt, that day which God hath ſanctified for his ſeruice, is not ſo conuenient for feaſting. It may be no leſs dangerous to deuoure *ſanctified time*, then *ſanctified things*. And in this caſe hath that ſaying a truth, *It is not meet that we ſhould leaue the Word of God, and ſerue Tables, Act.* 6.2. But now this feaſt without any doubt may bee on the Sabbath, yea, it is the ſpeciall feſtiuall, & high day of the week, wherein this feaſt is beſt kept. Againe, there be times wherein God cals to ſolemne faſting and humiliation, as when the Church is either in danger or diſtreſſe, but this feaſt is not hindred by faſting, it will ſtand well with it, and many a ſpeciall dainty diſh is ſerued in to this feaſting from a faſt.

4. Suppoſe a man could and might feaſt alwayes, yet were it a bruitiſh thing, and hog-like alwayes for a man to be cramming and crowding in belly cheere, alwaies to bee paunching and gutting. It is that for which the rich

Glutton is taxed, *Luk.* 16. that *he fared deliciouſly euery day*. But here to feaſt at this Table *euery day*, is that which makes a man euery whit as *Angell like*, as belly-feaſting euery day makes a man *ſwine-like*. Here it is a mans happineſſe to be a holy *Epicure*.

Nunquam credideris; felicem qui aduentitio letus eſt, exibit gaudium quod intrauit. Seuec ep. 99.

2. It is better then other feaſts, in regard of the *Independencie* of this feaſt vpon any other out-ward thing. This feaſt is able to maintaine it ſelfe of it ſelfe, & within it ſelfe. A man that hath a good conſcience, hath a feaſt, though he haue nothing elſe but it. A good Conſcience, though it haue nothing but browne bread and water, yet this hard fare marres not the feaſt; For this feaſt *ſtands not in meates, and drinks, but in righteouſneſſe, peace, and ioy in the holy Ghoſt*, Rom. 14. 17. *Quietneſſe and a dry morſell is better then an houſe full of good cheare with ſtrife*, Pro. 17. 1. Though it be but outward *quietnes*, when a man is free from vniuſt vexations, & the moleſtations of froward and contentious diſpoſitions, euen ſuch quietnes makes

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a *dry morſell* good cheere, makes a feaſt of a cruſt. But when there is inward quietneſſe of a good Conſcience, and a mans heart is at quiet from his peace with his God, what excellent cheere is a *dry morſell*, then? Though a man haue euer ſo good fare, yet to haue it ſawced with the bitterneſſe of contention, and to liue in a continuall wrangling with peeuiſh people, what poore content would a wel furniſht Table affoord ſuch a man? And what poore cheere, eſpecially, would all the feaſts in the world make, where there is brawling & contention from the cõſcience? Here then is the excellẽcy of this feaſt aboue all other feaſts. This feaſt is able to ſubſiſt, and to maintaine it ſelfe without other feaſting; other feaſting is nothing without this of a good conſcience. Other feaſting often hurts and hinders this feaſt, whileſt men by their vaine & licencious carriage therein, *Feaſting without all feare*, Iude 12. to make the Conſcience faſt and ſtarue; and whileſt their Quailes are beweene

their teeth, *leanneſſe enters into their ſoule. Pſam*, 106. 15. So farre is bodily feaſting from helping, that it hinders this feaſting rather. Conſcience, can haue mirth enough without a feaſt, but little is the comfort and content that a feaſt can giue, where the Conſcience is not good. Men may ſet a face vpon it and bragge, laugh, and be iolly in their feaſting, but yet in the *middeſt of their laughter the heart is ſorrowfull, and the end of that mirth is heauineſſe, Prou.* 14. 13. Conſcience awakened euen in the middeſt of the greateſt iollitie, giues men many a bitter twitch at the heart, and in the middeſt of all their reuellings, giues them *Vineger* and *Gall* to drinke. A good Conſcience is it that ſweetens and ſeaſons all the diſhes of a feaſt, that is the ſawce that makes meat ſauoury, the ſugar that ſweetens Wine, that is the muſicke that makes a mans heart dance.

Sed non eſt iſta hilaritas longa. Obſerua, videbis eoſdem in exiguum tempus acerrime videre, et acerrime rudere. Senec. ep. 92.

But let a man goe to the moſt ſumptuous, and delicious feaſts without a

good

good Conſcience, and how is it with him then? Iuſt as with *Belſhazzar*, *Dan.* 5. where the hand-writing on the wall marred al his mirth; or elſe it is in ſuch a caſe, as it was with *Haman*. The foole brags that he alone is inuited to *Eſthers* banquet with the King, *Eſth.* 5. 12. Oh how happy a man was he, vnder how fortunate a Planet was he borne, to be the King and Queenes Fauorite both? But ſee what little reaſon hee had to brag, *Chap.* 7. 2. Euen at the *banquet of Wine*, *Eſther* giues him a cup of gall at the banquet of Wine. Doth ſhe accuſe *Haman* to the King. Oh! how many glory in their banquetting, & their feaſting, but how often do their conſciences put *Eſthers* tricke vpon them, euen accuſe them to God, and gall and gird them in the midſt of their wine? Conſcience ſerues many, as *Abſaloms* villanies ſerued *Amnon*, when his heart was merry at *Abſaloms* feaſt, then they ſtabd him to the heart. Conſcience deales with them, as the *Iſraelites* were dealt withall in their Quaile feaſt. They had

had their Quailes, and their dainties, but a man would rather want their good cheere, then haue their ſawce. Their ſweet meate had ſharpe ſawce. Whileſt the fleſh was betweene their teeth, Gods anger brake in vpon them. So whileſt many are chewing their dainties, Conſcience fils their mouth with grauell, and ſo ſawces and ſpices their diſhes, that they finde but little content therein. So miſerable are all feaſts and merriments of this world, when a man wants the independent feaſt of a good Conſcience. So happy alſo are they that haue the feaſt of a good conſcience, although they neuer taſte bit of other feaſt whilſt they liue, although they be denied the crummes that fall vnder the feaſting Gluttons Table.

3. It is better in regard of the *vnuoluntarie ſaltie* of it. As for belly feaſts, it ſtands not with euery mans condition, and purſe to make them. It belongs onely to the richer & abler ſort to feaſt. Feaſting is a matter of charge and coſt, &

ſo

ſo is out of the reach of the poorer ſort. But here is the excellency of this feaſt. The pooreſt that is may make it, and the poore haue as good priuiledge to make it as the rich, & the poore in this reſpect may keepe as good an houſe as the beſt Nobleman, yea, for the moſt part the poorer ſort keep this feaſt beſt. *Nabal* makes *a feaſt like a King*, but wretched man, in the mean time what feaſt keepes his Conſcience? It may be many a poore Carmelite neighbour of his that went in a poore ruſſet coat, and liued in a poore thatcht cottage, kept that feaſt abundantly and richly, whileſt he poore for had not the crums that fell from their Tables. *Lazarus* could not haue the crummes that fell from the glutton's table, but how happy had it beene with the glutton if in ſtead of his delicious fare hee might haue had but the reuerſions of *Lazarus* boord. *Lazarus* may not come to his feaſt, no nor yet to his fragments, neither will *Lazarus* condition permit him to feaſt it as glutton did, but yet this

this feast of a good Conscience, *Lazarus* may make as well as hee, and can, and doth keepe it, whilest the glutton feeles many an hunger-biting gripe. What an excellent feast is this, aboue all other feasts, wherein the russet hath as much priuiledge as the veluet, the begger as the King, the poore tenant, as the rich Landlord? The rich Landlord often so feeds vpon, and eates vp his poor tenant by oppression, that the tenant is kept low enough for feasting. It is well with him if he haue food, he had not need thinke of feasting. But loe now the excellent feast of a good Conscience: Here may the tenant keepe as good cheere as the Landlord, yea, and it may be may feast, whilest the rich Landlord is ready to starue for want of this prouision.

Now then all this considered, what a *Motiue* should it be to make vs in loue with a good Conscience. How powerfully should this perswade vs thereto? When God would perswade men to come to the ioyes of heauen, he vses

no

no other argument then this, to inuite them to a feaſt, as in the Parable, *Luk.* 14. Behold, here is the ſame argument, to moue you to bee in loue with a good Conſcience, behold the Lord inuites you to *a feaſt*, and to a feaſt where ye ſhal haue ſufficiency, without want, or loathing, where ye ſhall haue wine, mirth, muſick, and good Company to the full. The twelue dayes feaſt of the *Natiuitie*, how is it longed for before hand, and how welcommed when it is come? And what may the reaſon be? But onely becauſe it is a feaſting time. This is counted a bleſſed good Time: And why a bleſſed good Time? As Chriſt was a bleſſed good man, and the Prophet that ſhould come into the world, and therefore ſhould be made a King, becauſe he had fed, & filled their bellies, *Ioh. 6.* So the moſt make that a bleſſed time, not for the memoriall of Chriſts Incarnation, but becauſe of the loaues Chriſt ſhall bee a King, and becauſe of the feaſt, the Time is bleſſed. Well then, & is the world ſo deſirous, and

and ſo glad of feaſting? Are feaſting Times ſuch bleſſed Times? Loe then I inuite you to a feaſt, to a bleſſed good feaſt indeed, that will make you bleſſed and truly happy. Not to a feaſt of twelue dayes, but to a feaſt that laſts all the twelue moneths of the yeare, to a continuing, & a continuall feaſt. How glad are many when they may goe to a feaſt? Loe a way to make feaſts for your ſelues. What a credit is it counted in the world for a man to keepe a good, and a great houſe, to keep feaſting and openhouſe for all commers, during the Feſtiuitie of the twelue daies? Would wee haue this credit of good houſe-keeping, not for twelue dayes but for all the yeere long? Get good Conſciences, keepe good Conſciences. There is no ſuch *good houſe-keeper*, as is the *good Conſcience-keeper*; for a good Conſcience is a feaſt, a continuall feaſt.

There is nothing that men deſire more then to liue merrily, and how many ſtumble at Religion, and keeping of a good conſcience, vnder an idle conceit

conceit that it is the way to marre all their mirth, & to make a man lumpiſh & melancholly. Doe not beleeue the diuell, do not beleeue his lying agents. It is a profane Prouerbe, that *Spiritus Caluinianus eſt ſpiritus melancholicus.* A good Conſcience is a feaſt, a feaſt with all dainties, muſicke, and wine. Can a man be melancholly at a feaſt, at ſo ioyfull, and ſo ſweet a feaſt? Doth feaſting make men melancholly, or make men merry? make men weepe, or laugh? If a man ſhould cry downe feaſting with this argument, That it makes men melancholly, would not all men laugh him to ſcorne? And why then ſhould a man feare melancholly more from a good Conſcience, then from a feaſt? There is none liues ſo merry a life as he that keepes a good Conſcience, he is euery day at a feaſt, he is alwayes banquetting. Yea, the worſt diſhes of this feaſt, euen thoſe at the lower end of the Table, are better then the moſt choyce rarities of other feaſts. The very teares that a good cõſcience ſheds haue more ioy

ioy and pleaſure in them, then the worldsgreateſt ioyes. And if theteares of a good conſcience be ſuch, what is the mirth & laughter of it? If weeping be ſo ſweet, what is ſinging? If the courſer diſhes be ſo dainty, what are the beſt ſeruices? Would we then liue merrily, and paſſe our dayes iocundly indeed? Get a good conſcience, and thou keepeſt a continuall feaſt, & that continuall feaſt will keepe thee in continuall mirth, and continuall ioy. Yea, though thou be in affliction, and vnder croſſes, ſo as thy dayes vnto the world may ſeeme exceedingly euill, yet ſhalt thou liue merrily as at a feaſt. Yea, this is the ſcope of the Scripture, *All the dayes of the afflicted are euill*, namely, in the eye and iudgement of the world: *but a good conſcience*, namely, to the afflicted, *is a continuall feaſt*. A good conſcience feaſts then, and turnes faſting dayes into feaſting dayes. A good conſcience feaſts a man in his pouerty, in his ſickneſſe, in the priſon, and cheers vp a man with many a dainty bit.

bit. The wine of this feaſt makes them forget all their ſorrow.

Now then that we would be ſo wiſe as to hearken to Gods inuitation to this feaſt, *Let vs keepe the feaſt with the bread of ſincerity and truth*, 1 *Cor.* 5. 8. Take heed now that wee put not off God as thoſe did, *Luk.* 14. inuited to the feaſt, with the excuſes of Farmes, Oxen and the like. So doe many, vrge them to the keeping of a good conſcience, and their anſwer is, If they ſhould be ſo preciſe how ſhall they liue, they ſhall haue but poore takings if they take ſuch a courſe, *I pray haue me excuſed*, I muſt liue. Thus they anſwer, as many good huſbands, when inuited to frequent feaſtings, do, No beleeue me it will not hold out, if I goe euery day a feaſting, I may go one day a begging, I muſt follow my buſineſs, and let feaſting goe. And ſo ſay men here. But take heed of putting off God thus. The time will come that thou wouldeſt giue all thine Oxen to haue but the ſcraps & crums of this feaſt, and thou ſhalt

ſhalt not haue them, God will ſerue thee as he did them, *Lu.*14.24. *None of thoſe men which were bidden ſhall* taſte *of my ſupper*. Thoſe that care not to keepe the feaſt of a good Conſcience, ſhall neuer come to Gods feaſt in heauen. If you refuſe to come to his feaſt now, God will at the laſt day thruſt you out of doores, when you will bee preſſing and crowding in, and ſhall ſay to you, Get you hence ye deſpiſers of a good Conſcience, you ſcorned the feaſt of a good Conſcience, and therefore now the feaſt and gueſts of heauen ſcorne you, here is no roome for ſuch to feaſt here, who haue made their conſciences faſt heretofore.

Chap. XIIII.

A third and a fourth motiue to a good Conſcience.

The third motiue to a good cõſcience.

COme we now to a *third motiue*, that may yet helpe to ſtirre vp our mindes to this neceſſary duty of getting

ting and keeping of a good conſcience. Beſides what hath beene ſaid, it is worthy of our conſideration, that without a good conſcience all our actions, yea our very beſt ſeruices to God are ſo farre from goodnes and acceptance, that they are abominable and diſtaſtefull vnto the Lord. The formall goodneſſe of euery mans actions is to bee iudged and eſteemed by the goodnes of his Conſcience, which being euill and defiled, makes all a mans actions to bee ſuch, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. *The end of the commandement is loue.* But what kinde of loue doth the commandement require, will any ſhewes or ſhadowes of obedience ſerue the turne? will the bare duty doing paſſe for currant? No, but ſuch loue to God and man, and ſuch performance of obedience as proceeds from *a pure heart and a good Conſcience.* So that let a man doe all outward actions of obedience, yet if a good Conſcience bee wanting, all is nothing. *For the end of the Commandement is loue out of a good Con-*

ſcience. As is a mans conſcience, ſo are all his workes, and therefore nothing acceptable that a wicked man doth, becauſe he doth it with an ill conſcience. *To the pure all things are pure*, but to the defiled their Conſcience is defiled, and that being defiled, it defiles all it meddles with, as vnder the Law the Leper defiled all he touched. The beſt meate, diſht & dreſſed with defiled and dirty hands, is loathſome to vs.

The honeſt workes of a mans calling are good workes in themſelues, but no good workes to him that doth them without a good Conſcience, *Pro.* 21.4. *An high looke, and a proud heart, and the plowing of the wicked is ſinne.* The calling of husbandry is counted the moſt honeſt calling of all others, yet where a good conſcience is wanting, a mans very plowing is ſinne. Come to holy duties of Religion and Gods ſeruice, and how is it with a man wanting a good Conſcience in them? That curſe of *Dauids*, *Pſal.* 109. 8. *Let his prayer be turned into ſinne*, lies vpon the ſerui-

ſeruices of all euill cõſciences. See. *Pro.* 15.8. *The ſacrifice of the wicked*, that is, of him that hath an euill conſcience, *is an abomination: but the praier of the vpright*, that is, of a man that hath a good and vpright Conſcience, *is his delight*. Obſerue the oppoſition, He ſayes not the *prayer* of the wicked, and the *praier* of the vpright, nor the *ſacrifice* of the wicked, and the *ſacrifice* of the vpright; but the *ſacrifice* of the wicked, and the *Prayer* of the vpright. A ſacrifice had prayer with it, but yet it was more ſumptuous and more ſolemn then ſingle player. Now who would not think but ſuch coſt ſhould make a man welcome, yet the ſingle prayer of the vpright is accepted, whileſt this ſacrifice is an abomination, yea, and that a vile abomination, *Iſa.* 66.3. A man of euill conſcience delighting in his abominations, makes his holieſt ſeruices ſuch. Let ſuch an one come to the Sacraments, and how will it be with him there? euen as in the former, To the impure, euen the pure Sacraments are

impure *Simon Magus* rather defiles the waters of baptiſme, then they cleanſe him, and it is not carnall baptiſme that auailes any thing without the *anſwere & ſtipulation of a good Conſcience*, 1 *Pet.* 3.21. And for the Sacrament of the Supper whether doth it profit an vncleane conſcience, or ſuch a Conſcience pollute it? It may be iudged by a like caſe reſolued, *Hag.* 2.11.14. The vnclean perſon by a dead body touching the *Bread*, or *Wine*, or *Oyle*, makes theſe to be *vncleane*. The ceremoniall vncleaneſſe by the touch of a *dead body*, typified the mortall vncleanneſſe of an euill conſcience, vnpurged from *dead workes*. God lookes eſpecially at the Conſcience in all our ſeruices, and if hee findes that foule and filthy, hee throwes the dung of mens ſacrifices in their faces, that come with the dung of their filthy conſciences, before his face. See therefore how *Paul* ſerues God, 2 *Tim.* 1.3. *Whom I ſerue from my forefathers with pure Conſcience.* It is an *impure ſeruice* that is not performed with

with a *pure Conſcience*, as ſleight as the world make of puritie. *How much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt purge your Conſciences from dead workes*, *Heb.* 9. 14. But to what end are they purged? *To ſerue the liuing God.* Therefore mark, that till the Conſcience bee *purged* and made good, there is no *ſeruing of God.* So *He.* 10. 22. *Let vs draw neer*, that is, in prayer, and the like duties; But how? *Hauing our hearts ſprinkled from an euill Conſcience.* Otherwiſe it is but a folly for vs to draw neere, for God will not be near when a good conſcience is far off. And therefore we are bid to *purifie our hearts*, when we are bid *draw nigh* to God, *Iam.* 4. 8.

Behold here then a ſpecial motiue to make a good Conſcience beautifull in our eye. As we would be loath our ſeruices of God, our praiers and holy performances, ſhould be abominable in Gods eye, ſo labor for good conſciences. As we would haue comfort in all our duties of obedience, ſo labour to make our conſcience good. It is a great

deale of confidence that ſilly ignorant ones haue in their *good prayers*, & their *good ſeruing* of God, as they call it, yea it is all the ground of their hope of ſaluation, when they are demanded an account of their hope: Now alas your good prayers, & your good ſeruing of God! Why what doe you talking of theſe things? Hath Chriſt *purged your Conſciences from dead workes?* Haue you by faith got your *conſciences ſprinkled*, and rineed in Chriſts blood, and ſo haue ye made them good? If not, neuer talke of *good prayers*, and *good ſeruing* of God: your prayers cannot bee good whileſt your Conſciences are naught. And *euill conſcience* before God, and a *good ſeruice* to God cannot ſtand together. But would you haue your *prayers good* indeed, and your ſeruice acceptable indeed? Then let your firſt care be to make your *Conſciences good.*

The fourth motiue to a good cõcience.

Fourthly, let this worke with vs as a maine *motiue* to a good Conſcience: That it is the *Ship* & the *Arke* wherein the *faith* is preſerued. The faith is a rich com-

commodity, a preciousfraught, and a good conſcience is the bottome, and the veſſell wherein it is caried. So long as the ſhip is ſafe and good, ſo long the goods therein are ſafe; but if the Ship ſplit vpon the Rockes, or haue but a leake therein, then are all the goods therein in danger of being loſt and caſt away. So long as a man keepes a good Conſcience, there is no feare of loſing the faith, the integrity and ſoundneſſe of the doctrine thereof. *Conſtancy* in the truth, is a fruit of good conſcience. *Pſal.* 119.54.55. *I haue kept thy law*; he had not declined from, nor forſaken the truth of God, but what held and kept him? *This I had becauſe I kept thy precepts*. Keeping of a good conſcience will keepe a man in the truth: It is that which is the holy preſeruatiue to ſaue from all errors, hereſies, and falſe doctrines. The better conſcience, the ſounder iudgement, the ſounder heart, the ſounder head. As the better digeſtion in the ſtomach, the freer the head is from aſcendent fumes that would

diſtemper and trouble the ſame, *Iohn* 7.17. *If any man will doe his will, he ſhall know of the doctrine whether it be of God.* how ſhall a man come to haue a ſound and a good iudgement, to bee able to iudge what is truth, and what is not? Let him get a good Conſcience, and make conſcience of *doing the will of God, Iohn* 14. 21. *He that hath my commandements and keepes them, &c.* ſuch a man hath, and keepes a good Conſcience. And what benefit ſhall ſuch a one haue by keeping a good Conſcience? *I will loue him, and I will manifeſt my ſelfe vnto him.* And *Pſal.* 50.23. *To him that orders his conuerſation aright, will I ſhew the ſaluation of God.* God doth communicate himſelfe and his truh to ſuch as make conſcience of their waies. The pure in heart ſhall ſee God, and the ſecret of the Lord is with them that feare him.

So that he that hath a good Conſcience, hath the only Antidote, the moſt excellent Amulet and plague-cake at his breſt that is in the world, to ſaue him

him from the peſtilence, and infection of Popery, Arminianiſme, Browniſme Anabaptiſme, &c. So long as the ſhip of Conſcience is whole, ſo long the Iewell of faith is ſafe. *Paul* would haue a Biſhop *to hold faſt the faithfull Word*, and to be ſound in doctrine, *Tit.* 1. 9. But yet marke it, that hee would firſt haue him be a man of a good conſcience, in the two foregoing verſes. And 1 *Tim.* 3. 9. he would haue the Deacons *hold the myſtery of the faith in a pure Conſcience.*

Contrarily, nothing ſo endangers the loſs of the faith & truth, & ſoundneſſe of doctrine, as doth the loſſe of good Conſcience. A corrupt Conſcience ſoone corrupts the iudgement. 1 *Tim.* 1. 19. *Holding faith and a good conſcience, which ſome hauing put away, concerning faith haue made ſhipwrack.* If the ſhip of conſcience cracke, how ſoone will the merchandiſe of faith wrack? If once the conſcience cracke, the braine will ſoone proue crazie; and an vnſound conſcience makes a

fearefull way for an vnſound and a rotten iudgement. 2 *Tim.* 3.8. *They reſiſt the truth,* there is their corrupt Conſcience: what followes vpon it? *Men of corrupt mindes,* vnſound in their iudgement concerning the faith. How frequent a thing is it in experience to ſee men when they loſe good Conſcience, together with it either to *loſe their gifts,* as the vnprofitable ſeruant his maſters talent, or elſe, to *loſe the truth,* and to fall into peſtilent and dangerous errors. So thoſe Prophets that made not conſcience in faithfull and holy execution of their office, ſee what was the fruit of their euill Conſcience, *Mic.* 3.5.6.7. *Therefore night ſhall bee vnto you that yee ſhall not haue a viſion, and it ſhall bee darke vnto you that yee ſhall not diuine, and the Sunne ſhall goe down ouer the Prophets, and the day ſhall be darke ouer them, &c.* Their darkeneſſe in life ſhould bee plagued with darkeneſſe in iudgement. To which purpoſe that is notable, *Zach.* 11.17. *Woe to the idoll ſhepheard that leaues the flocke*

flocke. There is an vnconſcionable ſhepheard, a man that makes no Conſcience to attend his miniſtery. What becomes of him? *The ſword ſhall bee vpon his right eye,* his beſt eye. *And his right eye* (ſhall not be pore-blinde, or dimmed, but) *ſhall bee vtterly darkened.* The loſſe of good Conſcience brings vpon men of knowledge and learning that reproach that *Nahaſh* the Ammonite would haue brought vpon all Iſrael, 1 *Sam.* 11.2. It thruſts out their *right eies.* Ill Conſciences not onely make men looke a ſquint, but it blinds them, and takes away their ſight.

And what is the reaſon that Popery gets ground ſo faſt, and ſo many turne Papiſts ſo eaſily? Surely it is no wonder, how ſhould it be otherwiſe, when men either hauing loſt all good Conſcience, or making no Conſcience of their wayes, but liuing looſely, vitiouſly, and licentiouſly, haue thereby prepared a way for Antichriſt and his religion, to enter with all ſucceſſe.

No

No wonder that men turne Papiſts ſo faſt, when long ſince they haue turned good Conſcience going. For that which *Bellarmine* ſpeaks is in the generall certainly true, though by him falſly and maliciouſly applyed, That they be not holy and graue men, but wicked, light, curious, wanton ones, that turne Ethnicks, or Hereticks, and that it ſeldome comes to paſſe, that any man makes ſhipwrack concerning the faith, that firſt makes not ſhipwracke concerning manners. See the truth of it in many of our backſliders to popery, eſpecially ſuch as haue beene zealous propugners of the truth. Where began the firſt declenſion, where the firſt flawe? Had not their conſciences firſt bruſht vpon ſome rocke? was not the firſt leake there? and when they had firſt put away good Conſcience, then there was a ſpeedy baniſhing of truth, and a ready entertainment of errour. And for the common ſort of their conuerts, conſider if many times they haue not bin the very riffe-raffe of our Church

Cum aliæ ventilari incipiunt, non frumenta ſed paleæ vento abripiente ſeparantur ab area. Ita prorſus cum Eccleſia per Ethnicorum perſecutiones, vel Hæreticorum deceptiones, Deo permittente, eribratur, aut ventilatur à Satana: non viri ſancti, & graues, ſed improbi, leues, curioſi, laſciui ab Eccleſia avolantes ad Ethnicos hæreticoſue transfugi-

Church, ſwearers, groſſe profaners of the Sabbath, vncleane and debauched drunkards, ſuch as our Church was ſick of, and deſire euen to ſpue forth, and then when they haue become a prey to all vicious courſes, through want of Conſcience, thorow Gods iuſt iudgement they haue become a prey to *Romiſh locuſts*, whoſe cõmiſſion is *onely to hurt ſuch*, & not thoſe whom the ſap of a good Conſcience keepes freſh & flouriſhing as the green graſſe, and trees of the earth, *Apoc.* 9. 4. For as *Salomon* ſpeakes of the bodily harlot, *Eccleſ.* 7. 26. ſo it is true of that ſpirituall whore of Babylon. *Her heart is ſnares and nets, her hands as bands*, her deluſions ſtrong; *who ſo pleaſes God*, and hath a care to keepe a good conſcience *ſhall eſcape from her, but the ſinner*, and hee that makes no conſcience of his wayes, *ſhall be taken by her*.

Well, let vs think wel vpon this motiue, we liue in dangerous & declining dayes, wherein men with a greedineſſe turne to their Romiſh vomit againe.

Beſides,

unt, nec fere ſolet accidere vt anic circa fidem aliquis naufraget, quam naufragere cæperit circa mores. Bellar. Orat. præfix. tom. 4.

Beſides, the factors of Antichriſt are exceeding buſie and pragmaticall to draw men from the faith of Chriſt, and the Holy Ghoſt tels vs they ſhall come with *ſtrong deluſions*. Now then all you that be the Lords people, ſaue your ſelues from this dangerous generation, all you that haue, or would be knowne to *haue the ſeale of God on your foreheads*, ſaue your ſelues from the ſeduction of theſe *Locuſts*. I, but how may that bee done? The deluſion is ſtrong, and it may be, we are weake. Lo then here is a remedy againſt their danger. Get, and keep a good Conſcience, liue as *Paul* did, in all good Conſcience, and thou ſhalt be ſafe from all their deluſions, *I haue kept the faith*, ſayes *Paul*, oh! let it be the care of vs, that that may be our cloſing voyce at our laſt day, and if we would *keepe the faith*, let vs *keep a good Conſcience*; Hee that in his life time can ſay, *I keep a good Conſcience*, he at his death ſhall be able to ſay, *I haue kept the faith*. Faith, and a good Conſcience are both in a bottome.

tome. Hold one, and hold both.

As therefore thou wouldeſt feare to turne Papiſt or any other heretick; ſo, be ſure to hold a good Conſcience, to hold on a good, honeſt, and a conſcionable man. So long as thou ſtandeſt vpon that ground, thou art impregnable, and the gates of hell ſhall not be able to draw thee from the faith of the Lord Ieſus. *Pro.* 6. 20. 22. 44. *My ſonne keep thy Fathers commandement, &c. And it will keepe thee.* So I may ſay here, *Keepe a good Conſcience*, and it will *keepe thee*, it will keepe thee ſound in the faith, it will keepe thee from being drawne away by the errour of the wicked, and it will keepe thee from the Wine of the fornications of the Whore of *Babylon*.

CHAP. XV.

The laſt Motiue to a good Conſcience; The miſery of an euill one.

THe laſt *motiue* remaines, and that is, The *horrour* and *miſery* of an *euill*

The fift motiue to a good Conſcience.

euill Conſcience. If men did but truely know what the euill of an euill conſcience were, and how euill a thing, and bitter it will bee when Conſcience awakens here, or ſhall be awakened in hell, a little perſwaſion ſhould ſerue to moue men to liue in a good Conſcience. We may ſay of the euill conſcience, as *Salomon* ſpeakes of the drunkard, *Pro.* 23.29. *Who hath woe? who hath ſorrow? who hath contentions? who hath wounds,* but not *without a cauſe?* Euen the man whoſe Conſcience is not good, euen he that liues in an euill conſcience.

An euill conſcience, how miſerable it is, we may ſee by conſidering the miſerie thereof, either *in this world*, or the *world to come.*

1. *In this life.* When an euill conſcience is awakened in this life, the ſorrow and ſmart, the horror and terror is, as the ioy of good Cõſcience, *vnſpeakeable.* An euill Conſcience in this life is miſerable, in regard of *feare, perplexity, and torment.* To liue in

in a continuall *feare*,& to haue a mans heart alwayes in ſhaking fits of feare, is miſery of miſeries. And ſuch is the miſery of an euill conſcience. *Pro.*28.1. *The wicked flees when none purſues.* Onely his own guilt purſues him,& makes him flee. His owne guilt cauſes a *ſound of feare in his eares*, Iob 15.21. Which makes him ſhake at the noiſe *of a ſhaken leafe*, Leu.26.36.yea,that ſo ſcars him that *terrours make him afraid on euerie ſide, and driue him to his feet*, Iob 18. 11. Yea, *there are they in great feare where no feare is*, Pſal.53.3. So that a man with an euill Conſcience awakened,may be named as *Paſhur* is, *Ier.*20. 3. *Magor-Miſſabib, feare round about*, as being a *terrour to himſelfe*,and to *all his friends*, verſe 4.

An euill Conſcience, euen makes thoſe feare fearefull feares,of whom al other ſtand in feare.How potent a Monarch,and how dreadfull a Prince was *BelſhaZZar*,who was able to put him into any fear,whom all the earth feared? And yet when his guilty Conſcience

Proprium autem eſt nocentium trepidare. Male de nobis actum erat.quòd multa ſcelera legem & iudicem effugiunt, & ſcripta ſupplicia niſi illa naturalia & grauia de præſentibus ſoluerent, & in locum patientiæ timor cederet Senec. ep. 98.

lookes him in the face, awakened by the palme writing on the wall, ſee where his courage is then, *Dan.* 5. 6. *Then the Kings countenance was changed and his thoughts troubled him, ſo that the ioynts of his loynes were looſed, and his knees ſmote one againſt another.* Who would haue had his feare to haue had his kingdome? Let him now cloath himſelfe with all his Maieſty, let him looke and ſpeake as terribly as he can, let him threaten the vileſt vaſſall in his Court, with al the tortures that tyranny can inflict, and let him try if he can for his heart put his pooreſt ſubiect into that fright and feare that now his Conſcience puts him into, in the ruffe, and middeſt of his iollitie. But I pray what ayles he to be in this fear, in this ſo extraordinary a feare? He can neither read, nor vnderſtand the writing vnto the wal. Indeed it threatned him the loſſe of his kingdome, but he cannot read this threatning, he knows not whether they bee bitter things that God writes againſt him, why may he not

not hope that it may be good which is written, and why may not this hope eaſe, and abate his feare? No, no. Though he cannot reade nor vnderſtand the writing, yet his guilty conſcience can comment ſhrewdly vpon it, and can tell him it portends no good towards him. His Conſcience now tels him of his godleſs impieties, in profaning the veſſels of the Temple of the true God, and that for this his ſacrilegious impropriation, and abuſe of holy things, God is now come to reckon with him. Thus can his Conſcience do more then all his wiſe men. *All the wiſe men came in, but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the King the interpretation therof.* Dan. 5. 8. But his Conſcience is wiſer then all his wiſemen, and when they are all puzzeld, that interprets to him, that this writing means him no good, and though hee cannot reade the ſyllables, yet his conſcience giues a ſhrewd neere gueſſe at the ſubſtance of the writing, and therefore hence comes that extaſie of feare-

and thoſe paroxyſmes of horror.

It was no better with *Adam* after his fall. After his ſinne committed, we find him in a great feare, *Gen.* 3.8. 10. and he hides himſelfe for feare. Now obſerue how his feare is deſcribed from the circumſtance of the time. *They heard the voyce of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the coole of the day. Luther* layes the *Emphaſis* of the aggrauation of his feare, vpon this word, *the winde or coole of the day.* The night indeed is naturally terrible; and darkeneſs is fearefull, whence that phraſe, *Pſ.* 91. *The terrors of the night.* But the day and the light, is a cheerefull and a comfortable creature, *Eccl.* 11.7. *Truely the light is ſweet, and a pleaſant thing it is for the eyes to behold the Sunne.* How is it then that in the faire day light, which giues courage and comfort, that *Adam* feares, and runnes into the thickets? Oh, his Conſcience was become euill, & full of darkeneſs, & the darkeneſſe of his conſcience turned the very light into darkneeſſe, and ſo turned the com-

Grauis male Conſcientiæ, iux eſt. Senec. ep. 123.

comforts of the day into the terrours of the night. So that in this ſenſe it may be ſaid of an euill Conſcience, which of the Lord is ſaid in another *Pſal.* 139. 12. Vnto *it the darkneſs, and the light are both a like.* As full of feare in the light, as in the darke. And beſides, the Lord came but in a gentle winde, the coole breath of the day, now what a ſmall matter is a coole winde, and that in the day time to, to put a man in a feare? Such ſmall things breede great feares in euill Conſciences. In what a woefull plight would *Adam* (thinke we) haue been, if the Lord had come to him, at the dead, and darke mid-night with earth-quakes, thunder, and bluſtring tempeſt?

We may ſee the like in *Cain.* After hee had defiled his Conſcience with his brothers blood, in what feares, yea, what idle feares liued he? Hee is ſo haunted with feares that though hee had liued in Paradiſe, yet had he liued in a land of *Nod*, in a land of *agitation*, yea, of trepidation. Iudge what

caſe his euill Conſcience made him in, by that ſpeech, *Gen.4.14. It ſhall come to paſſe, that euery one that finds me ſhall ſlay me.* Surely there could not bee many yet in the world, and thoſe that were in the world, where either his parents, brethren, ſiſters, or neer kinred, his feare ſeemes to imagine multitudes of people that might meet him, yea, & that euery one he meetes would murther him. What, will his Father or Mother be his excutioners? What if any of his ſiſters meete him, ſhall they ſlay him? is not ſuch a ſwaſh buckler as he, able to make good his party with them? Loe what feareſull, & terrible things a guilty conſcience proiects.

As an euill Conſcience is miſerable in its *feares*, ſo in thoſe *perplexities* which this feare breedes. Theſe perplexities doe miſerably, and reſtleſly diſtract a man. *Iſ.57.20. The wicked are like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt vp mire & dirt.* What is the reaſon of theſe troubleſome perplexities? The want of peace of a good

good Conſcience, *verſ.* 21. *There is no peace ſaith my God, to the wicked.* The windes make the ſea reſtleſſe, and ſtir it to the very bottome, ſo as the waters caſt vp mire and dirt. See in the troubled Sea, the embleme of a troubled Conſcience.

But the *Torment* exceedes all, & the main miſery of an euill conſcience lies in that. It is a miſery to be in feare, a miſery to haue inward turbulencies, & commotions, but to be alwayes on the racke, alwayes on the Strapado, this is farre more truly the ſuburbs of Hell, then is the Popiſh Purgatory. Oh! the gripes, and girds, the ſtitches, & twitches, the throws, & pangs of a galling, and a guiltie Conſcience. So ſore they are, and ſo vnſufferable, that *Iudas* ſeeks eaſe with an haltar, and thinkes hanging eaſe in compariſon of the torture of his euill conſcience. All the racks, wheeles, wilde horſes, hot pincers, ſcalding leade powred into the moſt tender, and ſenſible parts of the body, yea, all the mercileſſe, barbarous,

Pœna autẽ vehemens, & multo ſæuior illis Quas & Cœlitus grauis invenit & Radamanthus.

Nolle dicque ſuum geſtare in pectore teſtem. Iuvenal. Satyr 3.

and inhumane cruelties of the *holy houſe*, are but flea-bitings, meer toyes, and May-games, compared with the torment that an euill Conſcience will put a man to, when it is awakened. It is no wonder that *Iudas* hangs himſelfe, it had beene a great wonder rather if he had not hanged himſelfe.

Nolite enim putare quemadmodum in fabulis ſæpenumero videtis, eos qui aliquid impie ſceleratèque cõmiſerint agitare & perterreri furiarum tædis ardẽtibus. Sua quemque fraus, & ſuus terror maximè vexat, ſuum quemque ſcelus agitat, amentiaque

The *heathens* fabled terrible things of their helliſh *furies*, with their ſnakes & fierie torches, vexing & tormenting haynous, and great offenders. Theſe their *Furies* were nothing elſe, but the helliſh torments of guilty conſcience, wherewith wicked perſons were continually haunted, as ſome of the wiſer of themſelues haue well obſerued. All ſnakes and torches are but Idle toyes, and meere trifles, to the moſt exquiſite torment of a guilty and accuſing Conſcience.

The ſting of Conſcience is worſe then death it ſelfe, *Apoc.* 9.5,6. *Their torment was as the torment of a Scorpion when he ſtrikes a man; And in thoſe dayes ſhall men ſeeke death, and ſhall not finde it,*

it, and ſhall deſire to dye, & death ſhall flee from them. Popiſh ones tormented in their conſciences by the terrible and vncomfortable doctrines of ſatisfactions, Purgatory fire, &c. which thoſe *Locuſts* doe ſo terrifie them withall, ſhould rather chuſe death then liue in ſuch an vncomfortable condition: *The ſting of death* not ſo ſmart, as the *ſting of a Scorpion* in the Conſcience. The ſting of an accuſing Conſcience, is like an Harlot, *Prou.7.26. More bitter then death.* And as *Salomon* there ſpeakes of the Harlot, ſo may it be ſaid of a tormenting Conſcience, Who ſo pleaſes God ſhall eſcape from it, but the ſinner ſhall be taken by it.

Gods deare children themſelues, many of them are not freed from trouble in their Conſciences, but they haue their hels in this life, *Ion.2.2. Out of the belly of hell I cryed vnto thee.* God for their tryall ſpeakes bitter things vnto thē, & not only denies them peace, but cauſes their conſciences to be at warre with them. Now when God puts his owne

afficit. Suæ malæ cogitationes, conſcientiæque animi terrent. Hæ ſunt impiis aſſiduæ, domeſticæque furiæ, quæ dies noctesque parentum pœnas à conſcelerati ſſimis filiis repetant. Cicero pro Roſc. Amer. Suum quemque facinus, ſuum ſcelus, ſua audacia de ſanitate, ac mente deturbat. Hæc ſunt impiorum furiæ, flagitia, hæ faces. Idim. L. Piſon.

owne children to theſe trials, and diſquiets of Conſcience, they are ſo bitter,& ſo biting, that had they not the grace of God to vphold and preſerue them, euen they could not bee ſaued from dangerous miſcarriage. *Iob* was put to this tryall, and his Conſcience apprehended Gods anger,and we ſhal ſee what a caſe he was in,*Iob* 6.8,9. *O that I might haue my requeſt, and that God would grant me the thing I long for, euen that it would pleaſe God to deſtroy me, that he would let looſe his hand, and cut me off.* Nay, worſe,*Iob* 14.15.*Thou ſcareſt me with dreames, and terrifieſt me through viſions, ſo that my ſoule chooſes ſtrangling,and death rather then life.* Gods grace preſerues his Saints from ſelfe-murder,but yet not alwaies from impatient wiſhes;*Iob* wiſhes *ſtrangling* and chooſes it of the two, but goes no further.What wonder then that *Iudas*, doth ſtrangle himſelfe,when his Conſcience ſtares him in the face, when as *Iob*,with whom God is but in ieſt in compariſon, *chooſes ſtrangling*. If *Iob* wiſh

wiſh it, what wonder that *Iudas* doth the deed. Conſcience doth chaſtiſe the godly but with whips, but it laſhes the wicked with ſcorpions. Now if the whips be ſo ſmarting to *Iob*, as makes him *chooſe ſtrangling*, what wonder that the ſcorpions bee ſo cutting, as makes *Iudas* ſeeke reliefe at an haltar.

Yea, and that which addes to the miſery of an euill Conſcience, being awakened, it is ſuch a miſery as no earthly comfort can aſſwage or mitigate. Diſeaſes and diſtempers of the body, though they bee terrible, yet Phyſicke, ſleepe, & reſt vpon a mans bed, yeelds him ſome eaſe, & ſome comfort. Some time in ſome griefes the comfortable vſe of the creatures, yeelds a man ſome refreſhments, *Pro.* 31.6.7. *Giue wine vnto thoſe that bee of heauy hearts, let him drinke, and forget his pouertie, & remember his miſery no more.* But Conſcience being diſquieted, findes no eaſe in theſe. *Darius* againſt his Conſcience ſuffers innocent *Daniel* to be caſt into the Lyons denne. What cheere hath he

he that night? *He paſſed the night in faſting*, Dan.6.18. Not in faſting, in humiliation for his ſinne, but conſcience now began to gall him, and he hauing marred the feaſt of his cõſcience, Conſcience alſo marres his feaſting, none of his dainties will now down, his wine is turned into gall and wormewood, no ioy now in any thing. He had marred the muſicke of his conſcience, and now he brookes not other muſicke. *The Inſtruments of muſicke were not brought before him.* His guilty cõſcience was now awakened, and now he cannot ſleepe; *His ſleepe went from him.* So *Iob* in his conflict of Conſcience hoped for eaſe in his bed, *Iob* 7.13. *My bed ſhall comfort me, my couch ſhall eaſe my complaint.* But how was it with him? Either he could not ſleepe at all .*verſe*.3.4. *Weariſome nights are appointed vnto mee. when I lye downe I ſay when ſhall I ariſe, and the night be gone? and I am full of toſſing to and fro vnto the dawning of the day.* Needes muſt he toſſe, whoſe conſcience is like the Sea waues toſſed with

with the windes, or elſe if *Iob* did ſleepe, yet did not Conſcience ſleepe, *verſ.* 14. but euen in his ſleepe preſented him with ghaſtly ſights and viſions, *When I ſay my bed ſhall comfort me, then thou ſcareſt mee with dreames, and terrifieſt me through viſions.*

At other times when conſcience hath been good, Gods people though their dangers haue beene great, yet neither the greatnes, nor neerneſs of their dangers haue broken their ſleep. *Pſa.* 3. 5. 7. *I laid me downe and ſlept, I will not be afrayd of ten thouſands of people that haue ſet themſelues againſt me round about.* And yet if wee looke to the title of the *Pſalme, A Pſalme of Dauid when he fled from Abſolon his ſonne;* one would thinke *Dauid* ſhould haue had little liſt, or leaſure to haue ſlept. *Peter* thought to haue bin executed the next morrow by *Herod*, and though he alſo lodge betweene a company of ruffianly Souldiers, that happily one would feare might haue done him ſome miſchiefe in his ſleepe, yet how ſoundly

ſleepes

ſleepes he that night. *Act.* 12. And holy *Bradford* was found a ſleep, when they came to fetch him to bee burnt at the ſtake. Theſe fears brake not theſe mens ſleepe. How might this come to paſſe? They did as *Pſal.* 4. 8. *I will lay me down in peace and ſleepe.* He that can lie down in the *peace* of Conſcience, may *ſleepe* ſoundly, whatſoeuer cauſes of feare there be otherwiſe. But contrarily, he that cannot lie downe with the peace of conſcience, will find but little reſt & ſleepe, though his heart bee free from all other feares. Euill conſcience being awakened, will fill the heart with ſuch feares, as a man ſhall haue little libertie to ſleepe. Oh the ſweet ſleepe that *Iacob* had, and the ſweet dreame, when he lay vpon the cold earth, and had an hard ſtone vnder his head for his pillow. An hard lodging, and an hard pillow, but yet ſweet reſt, and ſweet communion with God. A good conſcience makes any lodging ſoft and eaſie, but down-beds, and down-pillowes, if there bee thornes in the Conſcience,

are

are but beds of thornes and beds of nettles. The bitterneſſe of an euill conſcience diſtaſtes all the ſweetes of this life, as when the mouth and tongue is furred in an hot Ague, all meates and drinkes are bitter to the ſicke partie. This is the miſerie of an euill conſcience awakened in this life?

2. But it may be many neuer feele this miſerie here, there is therefore the more miſery reſerued for them in hel, in the world to come. Indeed more by many thouſands go to hell like *Nabal*, than like *Iudas*; more die like ſots in *ſecurity*, then in *deſpaire* of Conſcience, Death it ſelfe cannot awaken ſome conſciences, but no ſooner come they into hell, but Conſcience is there awakened to the full, neuer to ſleepe more; & then ſhe laſhes and gaſhes to the quicke, and lets men learn that forbearance was no payment. Tell many men of Conſcience, and they are ready to flap one on the mouth with that prophane proverbe, *Tuſh, Conſcience was hanged many yeares agoe.* But the time

time will come, that they who haue liued in euill Conſcience, ſhall finde the Conſcience which they haue counted hanged, ſhall play the cruell hang-man and tormentor with them. They ſhall find Conſcience vnhanged when it ſhal hang them vp in hel, when day and night it ſhall ſtretch them there vpon the racke.

The torments which an euill Conſcience puts the damned to in hell, are beyond the expreſſion of the tongue, and the cõprehenſion of mans conceit. There be two ſpecial things in the torments of Hell, wee haue them both thrice repeated together, *Marke* 9.44. 46.48. *Where their* worme *dyes not, and the* fire *is not quenched.* There is an euer-liuing *worme*, and neuer-dying *fire*. And mark that in all the three verſes the *worme* is ſet in the firſt place, as it were to teach vs, that the prime and principall torment in hell is the *worme*, rather then the *fire*. And what is the *worme*, but the guilt of an euill conſcience, that ſhall lye eternally gnawing and

and graſping, twitching, and griping, the heart of the damned in hell. Men talke much of hell fire, & it were well they would talke more of it; but yet there is another torment forgotten, that would be thought on too. There is an *Hell worme*, as well as there is an *hell fire*. And it may be a queſtion whether of the two is the greateſt torment. And yet no great queſtion neither. For as the Heauen of Heauen, is the peace and ioy of a good, ſo the very Hell of Hell, is the guilt and worme of an euill Conſcience. A man may ſafely ſay, it is better being in hel with a good conſcience, thē to be in heauē if that might be, with an euill one. Heauen without a good cōſcience, what is it better thē Hel? Paradiſe was an Heauen on earth, but when *Adam* had loſt the Paradiſe of a good conſcience, what ioy did Paradiſe and the pleaſures of the Garden afford him more, then if he had beene in ſome ſad & ſolitary Deſert? A good conſcience makes a Deſert a Paradiſe, an euill one turns a Paradiſe into a De-

ſert. A good Conſcience, makes Hel to be no Hell, & an euill one makes Heaven to be no Heauen. Both the happineſs, & miſery of Heauen and Hell, are from the inward frame of the Conſcience. The Hell of Hell, is the worme of Hell, and that worme is the worme of an euill Conſcience, which if it bee not wormed out, and ſo the conſcience in this life made good, it will bee an immortall worme in Hell.

The helliſh deſpaire wherewith the damned are ouerwhelmed, comes rather frō this *worme*, then from the *fire*. Whoſe *worme* dies not, and whoſe *fire* is not quenched. The *fire* of Hell neuer quenches, becauſe the worme of Hell neuer dies. If the *worme* of Hell would die, the *fire* of Hell would go out. For if there were no guilt, there ſhould bee no puniſhment. So that the very Hell of Hell, is that ſelfe-torment which an euill conſcience breeds.

Now then all this conſidered, how powerfully ſhould it moue vs to labor for a good conſcience. Thou that go-

eſt

eſt on in thine euill courſes, and hateſt to be reformed and reclaimed, do but bethinke thy ſelfe, if God ſhould awaken thy Conſcience, in what miſery thou ſhouldeſt liue here, what an Hell to haue a palſie Conſcience? what a Hell on earth to be alwayes vnder the accuſations, inditements, and terrors of Conſcience, and to liue *Caine*-like in a land of *Nod*, in a continuall reſtleſſe agitation.

But eſpecially as thou feareſt that euerliuing and euer grabbing worm, ſo haue a care to get a good Conſcience. Greene and raw fruits breed Cheſt-wormes, which if heed bee not taken will eat the very maw thorow. A dead body and a putrified corrupt carcaſſe, breeds wormes that lye gnawing at it in the graue. The forbidden and rawe fruits of ſinne, are thoſe which breede cheſt wormes in the Conſcience. The corruptions of the ſoule, and dead workes, are thoſe that breed this liuing worme, take heed therefore of medling with theſe fruits that will breed

Vt ex cruditate febres naſcuntur, & vermes quando quis cibum ſumit intemperanter, ita ſi quis peccata peccatis accumulet, nec decoquat eapœnitentia, ſed miſceat peccata peccatis, cruditatem contrahit veterum & recentiũ

this worme,& get thy conſcience purged from dead works,get this worme killed with the ſooneſt,for if thou letteſt it liue til thou die,it wil neuer die at all,and will put thee to thoſe exquiſite torments,from which to be freed thou wouldeſt willingly ſuffer tenne thouſand of the moſt cruell deaths that the wit of man were able to inuent.

As then I ſay thou feareſt this *worme* of Hell, ſo get a good Conſcience, Drinke down euery morning a hearty draught of Chriſts blood, which may make this worme burſt. And when once this worme is burſt and voyded, &the cõſcience well purged by Chriſts blood, take heed euer after of eating thoſe raw fruits that will breed new wormes.Lead ſo holy,ſo vpright, and ſo conſcionable a life,that thou mayeſt not by thy freſh ſins clog thy Conſcience with freſh guilt. Get thy Conſcience purged by Chriſts blood,and thy conuerſation framed by Gods Word. *Thy words were found by mee, and I did eate them,* Ierem.15.16. Doe thou ſo, eate

delictorum igne adurentur proprio, et vermibus conſumentur. Ignis eſt quem generat malitia delictorum, vermis eſt conſcientia quod irrationabilia animi peccata, mentem pungunt, & viſcera exedant, vermes ex vnoquoque naſcuntur tanquam ex corpore peccatoris, hic vermis non morietur, &c. Amb. lib 7. in Luk c.14.

eat no more the unwholſome & worm-breeding fruits of ſinne; but *drinke* Chriſts blood, and *eate* Gods word, and they both ſhall purifie and ſcoure thy Conſcience from all ſuch ſtuffe, as may breed and feed the Hell-worme of an euill Conſcience.

CHAP. XVI

The portion and reſpect that a good Conſcience findes in the world.

AND thus haue we hitherto ſeene *Paules Proteſtation.* The ſecond point followes, namely, *Ananias* his inſolent & impetuous *Iniunction.* Verſe 2. *And the high Prieſt Ananias commanded them that ſtood by him, to ſmite him on the mouth.*

Paul had begun his defence in the former verſe, and that by authoritie & ſpeciall command, as appeares in the former Chapter, at the 30. verſe. But he had no ſooner begun, but hee is interrupted and cut off, and hath not only

ly his mouth ſtopt, but ſtopt with *Ananias* fiſt, *He commanded to ſmite him on the mouth.* Out of which carriage and violence of his, we may obſerue diuers things. Firſt learne;

What is the *Reward and portion of a good conſcience from the world.* It is the portion of a good Conſcience full oft to be ſmitten, either on the mouth, or with the mouth. Blowes either with the fiſt, or with the tongue. *To be ſmitten* one way or other, is full often the lot of a good Conſcience. *Smite him on the mouth*, ſayes *Ananias*. But let vs a little expoſtulate the matter with *Ananias*. *Smite him on the mouth?* But yet as *Pilate* ſpeakes in Chriſts caſe, *But what euill hath he done?* or what euill hath he ſpoken? *Smite him on the mouth?* But as our Sauiour anſwers, *Ioh.* 18. 23. *If he haue ſpoken euill, take witneſſe of the euill*, and proceed legally and formally: *If he haue ſpoken well*, or no manner of euill, *why cõmandeſt thou him to be ſmitten?* What, hath he ſpoken any treaſon againſt *Cæſar*, or the Romane gouern-

ment?

ment? If he haue, then as the towne-Clark of *Epheſus* ſpeaks, *Act.* 19. 38. *The law is open, & there are Deputies*, let thē accuſe him, & bring him to his anſwer. It is a baſe vſage of any ingenuous perſon, to bee ſmitten on the mouth in a Court of Iuſtice, a diſhonorable vſage of a Romane. Surely it ſhould ſeem by ſuch baſe & bitter vſage, that *Paul* hath ſome way or other foully forgotten & ouer-ſhot himſelf, that *Ananias* his ſpirit is thus embittered and prouoked againſt him. What, hath *Paul* giuen him any exaſperating & diſgracefull terms, hath he giuen him any open & perſonall girds, before the whole Councell? No, no: No ſuch matter at all. Why what thē is the matter that *Paul* muſt be thus baſely & thus deſpitefully vſed? Will ye know the cauſe? *Men and brethren, I haue liued in all good conſcience*. Loe here is the quarrell. He hath made a profeſſion of a good Conſcience, and for his good conſcience ſake are *Ananias* fiſts about his eares. There is nothing ſo mads men of wicked Conſciences, as

the profession and practice of a good conscience doth. The very name and mention of a good conscience makes *Ananias* halfe mad, & like one beside himselfe, he falles not onely to foule words, but to blowes also; and *Paul* must haue on the mouth for his good conscience sake.

Paul might haue blasphemed the blessed name of Christ, and rayled vpon the odious Sect of the Nazarens, hee might haue beene a drunkard, an adulterer, or a murtherer, and none of all these things, would haue stirred *Ananias* his blood, for none of all these should *Paul* haue beene smitten; but let him but once speake, or treat of, or any way meddle with good Conscience, and *Ananias* his blood is presently vp, he cannot holde his hands, but *Paul* must haue on the mouth, there is no remedy. So odious a thing is good Conscience and the profession of it to wicked men. Therefore this is that which a good Conscience must expect, euen *Ananias* his dole, fists, blowes,

blowes, ſmiting, hard and iniurious meaſure, from the world.

This is no new thing. It was our Sauiours caſe before is was *Pauls*, *Ioh.* 18. 22. *And when he had thus ſpoken, one of the officers which ſtood by ſtroke Ieſus with the palme of his hand, &c.* Lu. 22. 63. 64. *And the men that held Ieſus, mocked him, and ſmote him, And when they had blindfolded him, they ſtroke him on the face.* He felt the weight of their fiſts for the ſame quarrell that *Paul* did. So it was fore-propheciedof him, *Iſ.* 50. 6. *I gaue my backe to the ſmiters, and my cheekes to them that plucked off the haire.* It was the kindnes that *Zidkiah* could afford *Micaiah*, 1 *King.* 22. 24. *He went neere & ſmote Micaiah on the cheek*, & it was the thanks the Prophet was like to haue for the diſcharge of a good cõſcience. 1 *Ch.* 25. 16. *Forbeare, why ſhouldeſt thou bee ſmitten?* It is that of which *Iob* cõplained ſo long ſince, *Io.* 16. 10. *Mine enemy ſharpens his eyes vpon me, they haue gaped vpon mee with the mouth, they haue ſmitten me vpon the cheeke reproachfully.*

The

The ſame portion did the Prophet *Ieremy* meet withal, *Ier.* 20.2. *Then Paſhur ſmote Ieremiah the Prophet.* What was the quarrell? That in the former verſ. *He heard that Ieremiah had prophecied theſe things.* Onely for diſcharging his conſcience, for the conſcionable diſpenſation of Gods truth. And as ſometime they ſmote him on the mouth, ſo ſometime they ſmote him with the mouth. *Ier.* 18.18. *Come let vs deuiſe deuices againſt Ieremiah, come let vs ſmite him with the tongue, and let vs not giue heed to any of his words.* And why would they ſmite him with the tongue? Onely for his conſcience, and fidelity in his Miniſtery.

There is mention made of two falſe Prophets, againſt whom an heauy iudgement is threatened, *Ier.* 29.21.23 *Ahab* and *Zedekiah*, two baſe ſcandalous debauched perſons, who *committed villany in Iſrael, & committed adultery with their neighbours wiues.* The Prophet *Ieremy* he out of conſcience fulfils his Miniſtry, and ſee how light-

fingred

fingred *Paſhur* is, hee hath fiſts for *Ieremies* face, and ſtocks for his heeles; but in the meane time *Ahab* and *Zedekiah* they may whore, and play the villaines, and they feele not the weight of his little finger. If his fingers muſt needs be walking, there is worke for them, there he may ſtrike, and ſtocke with credit. But there is no ſuch zeale againſt them. No ſuch dealing with them. *Zedekiah* and *Ahab* may bee in good tearmes of grace with *Paſhur*, whilſt *Ieremiah* muſt haue on the face, & lie by the heeles. So wel can wicked men brooke villany, and any wretched courſes better then they can a good Conſcience: *Paſhur* can better endure an adulterous whoremaſter, then an honeſt conſcionable Prophet. Villains may walk at liberty, whilſt a good conſcience ſhal ſit in the ſtocks. Here then is the portion a good conſcience may looke for from the world. The better Conſcience, the harder meaſure. *For which of my good workes doe yee ſtone me?* ſaith our Sauiour, *Ioh.* 10. 32. A ſtrange recom-

recompence for good workes, and yet oft-times the beſt recompence and reward that the world can affoord good workes, & a good Conſcience, ſtones and ſtrokes. And if ſo be that feare of law, and happy gouernment binde their hands, yet then will they bee ſmiting with the tongue: & if the law keepe them in awe for ſmiting on the mouth, yet then will they doe what they dare, they will ſmite with the mouth.

Vſe 1. A faire Item to all that meane to vndertake the profeſſion and courſes of good Conſcience. Doe as many doe in caſe of marriage, before they affect the perſon, they firſt conſider how they like the portion. So here, before thou meddle with good Conſcience, think with thy ſelfe what is her portion, and if thou like not that, it is but a folly to thinke of a good Conſcience. Doe as our Sauiour aduiſes, *Luke* 14. 28. Sit downe firſt and count the coſt, & whether thou be able to endure that coſt or no. *Amaſias* hath a fierce ſpirit, and a

foule

foule heauy fiſt, *Paſhur* is a club fiſted fellow, and the ſpitting adders of the world wil ſmite their ſting deep. Suppoſe a good cõſcience may ſpeed better, as hauing the protectiõ of Chriſtian gouernment, yet this it muſt reckon vpon, and it muſt account of the hardeſt. Therefore thinke before hand before you meddle with it, how you can beare the fiſts and blowes of ſmiters if euer you ſhould come vnder them.

I may ſay here as our Sauiour did to the ſons of *Zebedeus*, *Mat.* 20. 20, 21. *Ye know not what ye aske. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I ſhall drink of, & to be baptized with the baptiſme that I am baptized with?* Many ſay they deſire to enter the courſes of good Conſcience, but doe not well know, nor well weigh what they deſire. Conſider with your ſelues, Are ye able to drink of the cup that a good conſcience ſhall drinke of? Can ye be baptized with the baptiſme that a good conſcience muſt be baptiſed with? Can ye endure the ſmart of *Ananias* blows? Can ye bear the load of

Paſhurs

Paſhurs club fiſt? Think vpon this afore hand, and weigh it wel, this is that you muſt make account of, that will ſet vpon the courſes of an good conſcience.

Vſe 2. Is this the portion of a good Conſcience, ſee then what a good meaſure of Chriſtian reſolution they ſhal need to haue, that take the profeſſion of it vpō them. Be ſhod with the ſhooes of the preparation of the Goſpell, *Eph.6.15.* Grow maruellous reſolute to harden thy ſelf, and to harden thy face againſt all enemies fiſts, & blowes whatſoeuer, that though *Ananias* ſhould daſh thee on the face, yet he might not daſh thee & thy good Conſcience out of Countenance. Thus did our Sauiour *Iſa.50, 6. I gaue my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the haire, I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.* But how was he euer able to endure all this? See *verſe 7. I haue ſet my face like a flint, and I know that I ſhall not bee aſhamed.* So muſt thou doe that meaneſt to keepe a good Conſcience. Get a face, and a fore-head of flint, that enemies

mies may as ſoone cracke a flint with their knuckles, as by their violence and iniuries driue thee from a good Conſcience. Get an *Ezekiels* face *Ezek.* 3. 9. Make thy forehead as an Adamãt, harder then a flint. Steele, & flint thy face with all heroicall reſolution. A face of fleſh will neuer endure, but a face of flint will hold *Ananias* fiſts tack, let him ſtrike while he will, he ſhall ſooner batter a flint with his fiſt, then ſtir a reſolued conſcience out of its ſtation.

But beleeue me, theſe be hard things to vndergoe, who will be able to abide ſuch hard meaſure, how therefore may one grow to ſuch reſolution, to abide the worlds fiſts, and the ſmart of their ſmiting? *Queſt.*

1. Conſider that Conſcience hath fiſts as well as *Ananias*. 1 Sam. 24. 5. and 2. Sam. 24. 10. *Dauids heart ſmote him.* And what are *Ananius* his blowes on the face, to the blowes of Conſcience at the heart? One blow on the heart, or with the heart, is more painefull then an hundred on the face, and as *Anſw.*

Reheboam

Rehoboam ſpeaks of himſelfe, 1 *King.* 12.10. ſo Conſciences little finger is thicker, heauier, and more intollerable then both *Ananias* his hands, & loynes. Now then here is the caſe. If *Paul* will ſtand to his Conſcience, then *Ananias* his fiſts will be about his eares. If *Paul* doe forſake or flawe good Conſcience for feare, or for the fauour of *Ananias*, then will conſciences fiſts be about his heart. Now then if no remedie but a man muſt haue blowes, it is good wiſdome to chuſe the lighteſt fiſt, and the ſofter hand, and to take the blow vpon that part that is beſt able to beare it with moſt eaſe. The face is better able to abide blowes then the heart, and *Ananias* his blowes are but fillips to the clubbing blowes of Conſcience. We would ſcarce iudge him a wiſe man, that to avoid a cuffe on the eare, would put himſelfe vnder the danger of a blowe with a club. Here is that then that may make vs to compoſe our ſelues to patience, and to grow to an hardineſſe and a Chriſtian reſolution.

Better

Better tenne blowes on the face, then one on the heart. Better an hundred from *Ananias*, then one from Conſcience, that will lay on loade; let the world ſmite, yet mine heart ſmites not, yea, that ſtroakes and comforts, whileſt the world ſtrikes & threatens. Therfore being ſmitten in caſe of conſcience, rather then giue out, do as our Sauior bids in another caſe, *Mat.*5.39. *Whoſoeuer ſhall ſmite thee on the right cheeke, turne to him the other alſo.*

2. Conſider that in the next Verſe, *God ſhall ſmite thee.* God hath ſmiting fiſts as well as *Ananias*. Let him ſmite, but yet there will come a time that God ſhall ſmite him: God will call ſmiters to a reckoning.

3. Conſider that of *Dauid, Pſal.*3.7. *Thou haſt ſmitten all mine enemies vpon the cheek bone, thou haſt broken the teeth of the vngodly.* God will not only ſmite the enemies of his people, but will ſmite them with diſgrace, as it is a matter of vile diſgrace to haue a boxe on the cheeke, and he will giue them

ſuch a *duſt* on the mouth as ſhall daſh out their very teeth; he will lay heauy & diſgracefull iudgments vpon them, as he did vpon *Abſolom*, of whom *Dauid* ſpeakes.

May it euer be thy lot to ſee good Conſcience vnder the fiſts of ſmiters, be not diſcouraged, ſtart not, ſtumble not at it. Be not ready to inferre; It is in vain to cleanſe a mans conſcience, and waſh his hands in innocency. But conſider, that this hath beene euer the worlds madneſſe, and the ancient lot of a good Conſcience, either to bee ſmitten with aduerſaries hands, or varlets tongues.

Chap. XVII.

The impetuous iniuſtice and malice of the aduerſaries of a good Conſcience.

AS we haue ſeen the entertainment a good conſcience meets withall in the world, ſo wee may here further ſee the inordinate violences that the enemies & haters of a good Conſcience are

ate caried with. Therefore out of this inſolent Iniunction of *Ananias*, wee may in the ſecond place obſerue:

The heady violence, and impetuous iniuſtice of the aduerſaries of good conſcience. *Smite him on the mouth.* A man would not imagine that hatred, and malice againſt goodnes, ſhould ſo tranſport a man as to make him run into ſo much, ſo open, ſo groſſe Iniuſtice. Doe but examine the fact, and you ſhall ſee a ſtrange deale of iniuſtice therein. *Doct. 2.*

1. *Who is he that bids ſmite?* The high Prieſt. Hee had a better Canon to liue by. *Mal. 2. 6. He walked with me in peace and equitie.* So *Leui* walked, and ſo ſhould Gods Prieſts walke alſo. And that Canon of *Paul* for the Miniſtry of the Goſpell, held no leſſe good for the Miniſtry of the Law, That hee ſhould *not be ſoone angry, no ſtriker*, Tit. 1. 7. How haps it then that the high Prieſt is thus light fingred. *Smite him on the mouth?* Oh! ſhame that ſuch a word ſhould come out of a Prieſts, eſpecially the high Prieſts mouth.

2. *Who muſt be ſmitten? Paul* an Innocent. Foule iniuſtice. Queſtionleſſe if *Paul* had offered ſuch meaſure but to *Ananias* his dog, to haue ſmitten him for nothing, but out of his meere ſpight *Ananias* would haue indged him a dogged fellow. And will *Ananias* vſe an innocent perſon as hee would bee loth a man ſhould vſe his dog?

3. *Where muſt this blow be giuen?* In open Court, where they were all conuened to doe iuſtice. Still the worſe. If he had commanded him to haue beene ſmitten in his priuate parlour, it had bin vniuſtifiable, but to ſmite him in open Court, and to doe iniuſtice in the place of Iuſtice, this is deepe iniuſtice. The place he ſate in, the grauity of his perſon, Gods high Prieſt, the ſolemnity of the adminiſtration of iuſtice, all theſe might haue manacled his hands, and haue a little tempered and bridled his ſpirit. A foule indignity for the *Iudge of Iſrael to be ſmitten on the cheeke*, *Mic.* 5. 1. As foule an iniquity for a Iudge of *Iſrael* to ſmite on the mouth wrong-

wrongfully,& in an open Court of Iuſtice. What an indecent thing for a Iudge to goe to cuffes on the bench? What an intemperate and a vindictiue ſpirit argues it? But what is the Indecency to the Iniuſtice? And what iniuſtice to that which is done vpon the Bench? Of all wormewood that is the moſt bitter, into which iuſtice is turned.

4. *For what is the blow giuen?* For a good Conſcience. What? And hath Gods high Prieſt no more Conſcience then ſo? his place teaches him to be a protector, defender, & an incourager of good conſcience. His whole office is matter of Conſcience, and will hee that ſhould teach, maintaine, & encourage good Conſcience, will he ſmite men for good conſcience? What is this but *Iſa.* 58. 4. *to ſmite with the fiſt of wickedneſſe?*

5. *When is the blow giuen?* When he is beginning to plead his owne innocency, and to ſpeake in his owne defence. More Iniuſtice yet. Did not *Nicodemus*

ſpeake reaſon. *Ioh.*7.51. *Doth our law iudge any man before it heare him?* Nay, if *Ananias* haue no regard to Gods law, as it ſeemes hee hath but a little, that will ſmite a man for good Conſcience, yet what will he ſay to *Cæſars* law? *Act.*18.25. *Is it lawfull for you to ſcourge*, and ſo to ſmite, *a man that is a Roman and vncondemned*, and vnheard? To iudge & condemne a man vnheard, is deepe Iniuſtice, but farre deeper to puniſh, and execute him. Will he hang a man, and then trie him? Loe here indeed a right vnrighteous Iudge, that feares neither God, nor man; that regards neither Gods law, nor *Cæſars*.

To haue done by *Paul* as *Gallio* did, *Act.*18.14.16. Whē *Paul* was about to open his mouth, to driue him and the reſt from the iudgement-ſeat, this had bin iniuſtice, but when *Paul* opens his mouth to ſpeake for himſelfe, for *Ananias* to ſtop his mouth, & to ſtop it with his fiſts, to ſtop his mouth, & ſmite him on the mouth both, when hee was to ſpeake in his owne defence, what greater

ter depth of Iniuſtice can we imagine? An hũdred to one but *Ananias* was one of the Sanhedrim, which at the time when the officers not hauing apprehẽded Chriſt, fell a curſing the people, *Ioh.7.49.This people that knowes not the law is curſed.* Vpon which ſpeech *Nicodemus* ſeems to meet kindly with them *v.51.Doth our law iudge any man before it heare and know what he doth?* As if hee had ſaid, Doe you glory in the knowledge of the law, and are they curſed that know not the law, what then are they that knowing the law go directly againſt it? Are the people, *Ananias*, curſed that know not the law, what art thou thy ſelfe then who knoweſt both Gods law and *Cæſars*, and yet through malice againſt *Paul* ſinneſt againſt both? Vniuſt and malicious proceedings God will not let them haue the honour ſo much as of the colour of formality, and legality in their courſes. But they ſhall bee ſo caried, that the madnes & malice of thẽ, may lie manifeſtly opẽ to the view of all the world.

6. *By what authority is the blow giuen?* *Ananias* commanded them. Yea but *Mal.* 2. 7. *The Prieſts lips ſhould preſerue knowledge, and they ſhould ſeeke the law at his mouth.* And ſhould they that ſhould ſeeke the law at his mouth, againſt all law at his command, ſmite men on the mouth? It was too much that *Gallio* did, and the holy Ghoſt leaues a deepe diſgrace vpon him for it, *Acts* 18. that he would ſuffer others to ſmite *Soſthenes*, and *not to care for it.* It was too much that *Ahab* ſuffers *Zidkiah* to ſmite *Micaiah*, and to breake the Kings peace in the kings preſence, he ſhould haue condemned him at leaſt to loſe his hand, for ſtriking before the King. But here is a worſe matter, he not only ſuffers it, but commands it to bee done. *Ananias commanded* to ſmite. Vniuſtice *ſuffered* by authority is too much, but vniuſtice *commanded* by authority, that is farre worſe.

Vſe 1. *Non eſt crudelior in orbe terrarum ira,*

It ſhewes the truth of *Pauls* phraſe, 2 *Theſ.* 3. 2. *Vnreaſonable men*, or *abſurd* men. Malice againſt the truth and the Goſpell,

Goſpell, ſo hurries aduerſaries, that it tranſports them beyond all bounds of common equitie, common honeſty, the grauity, of their perſons, & places; ſo as neither law of God, nor law of man can reſtraine their violence, and impetuouſneſſe. No bounds can keep a malicious ſpirit within compaſſe. It makes men forget common ciuility, and carries men beyond all *Decorum*, euen that *Decorum* their place and office calls for. *Bonner* cannot content himſelfe to iudge, & condemne Gods ſeruants to the fire, it ſatisfies him not to be their iudge, but he muſt be taking the Beadles, or the Hangmans office out of his hand too, and muſt be whipping them with his owne hands; And malicious *Story* forgetting the grauity of his Doctorſhip, muſt be throwing Fagots at the faces of the Martyres, when bound to the ſtake to bee burned. What is to be *abſurd* and *vnreaſonable*, if this be not? Murtherers, and bloody cut-throats ſhall finde more legall and formal proceedings at their hands

quã Eccleſiæ ſanguinaria & hypocritarum: Nam in politica irâ eſt aliqui humani reliquũ. Nullus tam immanis latro ad ſupplicium rapitur, quin aliquâ commiſeratione tanguntur homines: Sed cum falſa illa & ſanguinaria Eccleſia in filium veræ Eccleſiæ inciderit, non ſatis ei eſt effudiſſe ſanguinem, etiam maledicit, execratur, denouet, & in miſerum cadauer ſeuit: itaque ita falſæ eccle-

hands, then the maintainers of the Goſpell, and Gods truth ſhall doe at their tribunals. To be ſure, *Barabbas* ſhall finde more fauour, and leſſe hatred then *Chriſt*.

ſiæ, & furor phariſaicus eſt furor planè diabolicus. Luther in Gen. cap 4. Vſe 2.

Iudge by this what may be lookt for, if euer the Romiſh *Ananias* ſhould get head amongſt vs again. *Ananias* his ſpirit liues ſtil in that chaire of peſtilence. If euer therfore we ſhould come vnder his fingers, looke neither for law nor reaſon, honeſty, nor equitie, looke for nothing but the weight of his fiſts.

Thus haue we ſeene the enemies impetuouſneſſe in this point, & we may yet ſee a little more in the next. Therefore further in the third place obſerue.

Doct. 3.

Ananias commands to ſmite *Paul*. A falſe Prieſt to ſmite a true Apoſtle. Neuer doe Gods faithful ſeruants ſuffer harder meaſure then from ſuch. Who *ſmites Micaiah*, but that counterfeit Enthuſiaſt *Zidkiah*? 1 *Kin.* 22. Wel might he come in with his horns. They were emblematicall, and better ſignes of

of the malice of his heart, then of the truth of his Prophecy. There bee no ſuch horned beaſts that puſh ſo dangerouſly againſt Gods true Prophets, as Satans falſe Prophets are, *Ier.*20. *Ieremy* is buffeted and ſtocked, and who is the deed-doer? *Paſhur* the Prieſt. See *Ier.* 26.8.11.16. The Prophet finds more reaſon and faire dealing from the Princes, and the people, then frō the Prieſts and the Prophets. Theſe were fiercely bent againſt him, and nothing would quench the Wolues thirſt, but the Prophets blood. *Pilate* can finde no fault in Chriſt, yea ſeekes to deliuer him; *but the chiefe Prieſts and the Elders perſwaded the multitude that they ſhould aske Barabbas and deſtroy Ieſus.* Mat.27. 20. How woefull a caſe was it, that more Iuſtice and equitie ſhould be in an heathen *Pilate*, then in the Prieſts? How well would it haue become them to haue ſticked, and ſtood for Chriſt, if *Pilate* had ſought his life, rather then that an heathen ſhould pleade for him, whileſt thoſe that glory that they

they are the Prieſts of God, ſhould ſeeke the murther of Gods Son. What a pittifull caſe that *Pilate* ſhould be the Iew, and the Prieſts the Heathens? Therefore is *Pauls* Preface in his anſwer before *Agrippa* worth the noting. *Act.26.2. I thinke my ſelfe happy King Agrippa, becauſe I ſhall anſwer for my ſelfe this day before thee.* Why, what was *Agrippa?* He was an heathen man. Why then ſhould hee thinke himſelfe happy to anſwer before him? Had hee not beene happier if he might haue anſwered the matter before the high Prieſt? No; for *Agrippa* giues him libertie to ſpeake for himſelfe, *Act.26.1 Then ſaid Agrippa to Paul, Thou art permitted to ſpeake for thy ſelfe.* But *Ananias* the high Prieſt layes him on the mouth when hauing leaue he begins to ſpeake for himſelfe. There is more hope of reaſon, and faire proceeding from heathen *Agrippa*, then from *Ananias*. There be no ſuch virulent, and violent enemies againſt Gods truth and ſeruants as are degenerate, & counterfeit

ſeit friends, and amongſt thoſe ſtil they be the bittereſt, whom it behoued to bee the beſt. The bittereſt enemies againſt the Church, are thoſe within her owne bowells.

Ananias was an vſurper of the office of the Prieſthood, and marke how hee carries himſelfe in the place. He commands *Paul* to bee ſmitten. Vſurpers commonly are ſmiters, and vſurpation is vſually attended with violence. Such as the entrance, ſuch the adminiſtration. We ſee it true in *Abimelech*, and *Athaliah*. That as it is ſaid of Pope *Bonif.* the eight, that he *entred like a fox, raigned like a lyon, &c.* So was it with *Ananias*, he had a foxes entrance, he came not to the Prieſthood by an hereditary ſucceſſion, but as the faſhion then was by ſimony, bribery, and flattery, and now ſee how he raignes like a Lion, & commands *Paul* to be ſmitten on the mouth. An ill entrance into any place of office in Church, or Commonwealth, cannot promiſe any good in the adminiſtration thereof.

Doct 4.

Integritas præſidentium eſt ſalus ſubditorum, principatus autẽ quẽ ambitus occupavit, etiamſi mobilus, atque actibus non offendit, ipſius tamen initii ſui eſt pernitiſ-

See what woefull times here were, what bitterneſſe, what madneſſe againſt a good Conſcience. And theſe were the times that did a little fore-run the fatall and fearefull ruine and deſolation of *Ieruſalem*, and the Nation of the Iewes. *Ananias* his deadly hatred of goodneſſe, and good Conſcience, was a bud of the fig-tree, that the particular Iudgement of Ieruſalem was euen at the doores. *When the rod is bloſſomed, and pride hath budded, and violence*, ſpecially againſt good Conſcience *is riſen vp into a rod of wickednes*, then may it truly be ſaid, *Behold the day, behold it is come, The time is come, the day drawes neere. Ezech.* 7. 10. 11. 12. By *Bede* deſcribing the ancient deſtruction of this kingdome of *Brittaine*, this is made a fore-runner thereof, *The hatred of the profeſſors of the truth as of ſubuerters, all the ſpite and hate was againſt them.* Our Sauiour tels his Diſciples, *Lu.* 21. 11. *of fearful ſights & great ſignes* that ſhould be from heauen, before the deſtruction of Ieruſalem. And ſo there was a fearfull

eſus exemplo: & difficile eſt vt bono pereguntur exitu, quæ malo ſunt inductæ principio, ex Decret. Dott. 5.

Odium in veritatis profeſſores tanquam ſubverſores omnia tela & odium in hos. Bed. hiſt. gent. Angl. l. 1. *c.* 14.

full of comet, and many other prodi-ous things before the ſame. Now if the Iewes had had hearts to haue conſide-red it, this cordiall malignity on euery hand againſt good Conſcience was as ſad a Prognoſticator of their approa-ching ruine, as any blazing ſtar, or ter-rible ſight whatſoeuer. It is an ill pre-ſage of a Nation going downe, when once good conſcience is fiſted downe.

CHAP. XVIII.

The ſeuerity of Gods iuſtice vpon to ene-mies of a good Conſcience, and the vſu-all equitie of Gods adminiſtration in his executions of iuſtice.

THus haue we ſeene *Paul* fiſted, and layd on the mouth. How doth *Paul* now take this blow at *Ananias* hands? He ſmites not againe, nor offers to repell one violence with another; he had learned of Chriſt rather to haue turned his other cheeke to him. But yet though he ſmite him not with the fiſt, yet hee ſmites with a checke and

and a iuſt reproofe for his violence. And ſo may a mā ſmite without tranſgreſſion, and without reuenge, *Pſ.* 141. 5. *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall not breake mine head.* So may a man ſmite, and yet bee a righteous man. Theſe blowes are not to breake heads, as *Anias* his blowes are, but theſe are to breake hard hearts. Thus *Paul* ſmites without tranſgreſſion of the bonds of meekneſſe and patience. And ſo wee are now come to the third main point in the Text, *Pauls* zealous anſwer, and *conteſtation.*

Verſe 3. *Then ſaid Paul vnto him, God ſhall ſmite thee thou whited wall.*

The conteſtation is contained in the whole verſe. And in this conteſtation we haue a denunciation of iudgement, and that happely by a Propheticall & an Apoſtolicall ſpirit, propheſying to him what ſhould befall him; not an imprecation out of a priuate ſpirit ſtirred with a deſire of reuenge, *God ſhall* or *will ſmite*, not, I pray God ſmite, or I hope to ſee the day when God ſhall ſmite

ſmite, but *God ſhall ſmite*. As if he had ſaid, Well *Ananias*, thou haſt ſmitten me, heare now what thy doome from God is, I am ſent to thee with heauy tydings: God will call thee to reckoning for this blow, and Gods hand is ouer thine head to pay thee in thine owne kinde. So then from the whole learne thus much.

Doct. *Chriſtian patience though it binde a mans hands, yet doth it not alwayes bind a mans tongue*. Though it lay a law vpon a man to forbeare violence, yet layes it not a law vpon him alwayes to enioyne him ſilence. Though a man in *Pauls* caſe may not ſtrike, yet hee may ſpeake. Though Religion pinyon a mans armes from ſtriking, yet doth it not ſow and ſeale vp a mans lips from ſpeaking. *Ananias* hath ſmitten *Paul* on the face, and if it pleaſe him to haue another blow, he will not reſiſt him, he hath his other cheeke ready for him, if his fingers itch to be doing; but yet for all this, though *Paul* hold his hands, he doth not hold his peace. Indeed *Chriſts*

precept is well knowne, *Matth.* 5.39. *Turne the other cheeke alſo*, but yet for all that, ſee what his practice was when he was ſmitten, *Iohn* 18. 23. Ieſus anſwered him, *If I haue ſpoken euill beare witneſſe of the euill, but if well, why ſmiteſt thou me?* And yet his precept and practice doe not interfeire, nor croſſe ſhinnes. For though by his precept he forbids vs to retaliate, or recompence iniury with iniury, out of the heat of a vindictiue ſpirit, yet by his practice he warrants vs in caſes of iniurie to make a manifeſtation both of our own innocency, and others iniuſtice. Religion bindes no man to be a Traitor to his owne innocency, and the iuſtice of his cauſe, and by ſilence to abet others iniuſtice. With a good Conſcience may a man ſpeake, ſo long as he ſpeaks as *Paul* did before *Feſtus*, Act 26. 25. *The words of truth and ſoberneſſe*. So a man anſwer truly, ſoberly without tackes of gall, and impatient touches of reuenge. Chriſt and Religion ſay to a man conuented, and iniuriouſly proceeded

ceeded against, as *Agrippa* did to *Paul*, Acts 26. 1. *Thou art permitted to ſpeake for thy ſelfe.* This in generall, more particularly, in this *Denunciation*, Conſider the iudgement denounced, that is this, *God ſhall ſmite thee.* From which we may obſerue two things, First:

Doct. 1.

See Gods iudgements, and the ſeuerity of his iuſtice againſt the enemies of a good Conſcience, and his faithfull ſeruants. *Ananias* ſmites *Paul*, and for his good Conſcience, and what gets hee by it? God will ſmite him, and giue him as good as he brings. *God will ſmite ſmiters.* *Ananias* ſmites *Paul*, and God will ſmite *Ananias*; yea, and God did ſmite *Ananias*, for hee was afterwards ſlaine by *Manaimus*, one of the Captaines of the *Iewes*.

It is a dangerous thing not to ſmite when God commands, 1 *King.* 20. 35, 36. He that would not ſmite a Prophet when God commanded, was ſmitten with an heauy iudgment. It is no leſſe dangerous to ſmite when God forbids ſmiting; God hath an heauy hand for

thoſe that are ſo light fingred, and hee will giue them blow for blow that wil be ſmiting his for a good Conſcience.

Touch not my annoynted, and doe my Prophets no harme; Pſal. 105. 15. He that touches them, touches *the apple of Gods eye, Zach.* 2. 8. So he that ſmites them, ſmites the apple of his eye. The eye is a tender place, and ſenſible of a little blow. God will not take a blow on the eie, nor bear a blow on his face at the hands of the proudeſt enemies of them all, and though we muſt turne the other cheeke rather then ſmite againe, yet the Lord to whom vengeance belongs, will take no blowes at their hands, but if they wil be ſmiting, they ſhall be ſure to heare of him to their coſt.

You find *Exo.* 2. 11. an Ægyptian ſmiting an Iſraelite. It becomes none better then Egyptians to be ſmiting Iſraelites. *Moſes* ſpies an Egyptian ſmiting of an Hebrew. What gets the Egyptian in the end? See verſe 12. God ſtirs vp the ſpirit of *Moſes* to ſmite him, and

and to ſlay him. Thus will God teach Egyptiãs to be medling. *Paſhur* ſmites *Ieremy*, *Ier.* 20.2. What got hee by it? The heauy ſtroke of Gods hand vpon himſelfe and all his friends *verſ.* 3,4, 5,6. *Herod* was a ſmiter too, *Act.* 12.1. 2. *He ſtretched forth his hands to vexe certaine of the Church, & he killed Iames the brother of Iohn with the Sword.* And what became of him in the end? See ver. 23. *The Angel of the Lord ſmote him, and he was eaten vp of wormes, and hee gaue vp the ghoſt.* It is ſaid of *Ionas* his gourd that a worme ſmote it, and it withered, *Ion.* 4. That was much that a worm ſhould ſo ſoon ſmite the gourd. But when men will bee ſmiting Gods people, and his Prophets for a good Conſcience, and when *Herod* will be ſo buſie as to ſmite Apoſtles, God can ſend not onely an Angell, one of his moſt glorious creatures, but euen a baſe worme euen one of the weakeſt creatures to ſmite *Herod*, and eate him both. *Ieroboam* ſtretches forth his arme againſt the Prophet, 1 *King.* 13. and his

arme withers, he doth but threaten to ſmite, & God ſmites him. How much more when *Herod* ſtretches forth his hand to vexe the Church, and to ſmite Gods Miniſters, will GOD not onely wither them, but ſmite him, as *Sampſon* ſmote the Philiſtims, *hippe and thigh*, and make him a rotten, and a ſtinking ſpectacle to al malicious ſmiters to the worlds end.

Thus is that true which the Prophet implies in that ſpeech, *Iſa.* 27.6. *Hath hee ſmitten him as hee ſmote his ſmiter?* Marke then Gods dealing, he vſes to ſmite ſmiters.

Neither is this true only of ſmiters with the fiſt, and with the ſword, but it is alſo true of thoſe *ſmiters*, *Ierem.* 18.18. *Come, and let vs ſmite him with the tongue*. Euen ſuch ſmiters will God ſmite alſo, as we may ſee there, *ver.* 21, 22, 23. Thus God met with *Nabal*. *Dauid* ſends for reliefe to him vpon his feſtiuall day, & he in ſtead of an almes falls a railing on him, and calls him, in effect, a Rogue, a Vagabond, and

and a runne-away. Thus he ſmote *Dauid* with his tongue. What followes? See verſe. 38. *And it came to paſſe about ten dayes after, that the Lord* ſmote *Nabal.* And how ſmote he him? *That hee died.* So *Zach.* 14. 12. *Their tongue ſhall conſume away in their mouth.* What might the reaſon be of that iudgment? Becauſe happily many that cannot, or dare not fight with their hands, for feare of the law, yet fight againſt Gods Miniſters and his ſeruants with their tongues: Well, God hath a plague to ſmite ſuch ſinners. Though they ſmite but with the tongue, yet God wil ſmite them, and giue them their portion with the reſt of the aduerſaries of the Church. And if God will not ſpare ſuch ſmiters, how much leſſe will hee ſpare ſuch as ſmite with the ſword?

Terrour to all ſmiters, either with hand or tongue, Smite on, goe on in your malicious courſes, doe ſo, but yet know that there is a ſmiter in heauen that will meet with you. *Had Zimri peace who ſlew his maſter?* So ſaid *Iezabel* *Vſe. 1.*

to *Iehu*, and ſo may it be ſaid in this caſe. Search the Scriptures, ſearch the hiſtories of the Church; Had euer any ſmiter peace, which lifted vp eyther hand, or tongue, againſt any of the Lords people? Did ſmiters euer ſcape ſcot-free? Had they any cauſe to brag in the end? Had they euer any cauſe to brag of the laſt blow? Did *Herod* proſper that ſmote *Iames* with the ſword? did *Ananius* proſper that ſmote *Paul*? Did the *Egyptian* proſper that ſmote the *Hebrew*? Did *Doeg* proſper who was a *tongue-ſmiter*, as well as an *hand ſmiter*. *Pſal.* 52. Oh conſider this you that dare lift vpon your hands and tongues againſt a good Conſcience, & be afraid of Gods ſmiting hand, tremble to meddle in this kinde. Learne to hold your hands and tongues, vnleſſe ye long to feele Gods ſmiting hand. Eſpecially take heed of ſmiting Gods Miniſters in any kinde. *Deut.* 33. 11. *Leuy* hath a ſtrange bleſſing, *Bleſſe Lord his ſubſtance, and accept the worke of his hand*, ſmite *through the loynes of them*

them that riſe againſt him, & of thē that hate him, that they riſe not againe. God ſaw, that of all others *Leuy* would be moſt ſubiect to the blowes of fiſts, and tongues, and therefore hee is fenced with a bleſſing for the nonce, to make ſmiters feare to meddle with him, or if they will needs meddle, yet to let them ſee that it were better to wrong any other Tribe then that; God would ſmite them, and ſmite them to the purpoſe, that ſhall offer to ſmite him.

Vſe 2.

Here is that which may make Gods people comfortably patient vnder all the wrongs & iniuries of ſmiters in any kinde. Here is that may make them by patience to poſſeſſe their ſoules, and may make them hold their hands and their tongues from ſmiting. Smite not thou, God will ſmite ſmiters. Indeed when wee will be ſmiting, we preuent Gods ſmiting, & ſo they haue the eaſier blowes by the meanes: For what are our blowes to the Lords? Do as Chriſt did, 1 *Pet.* 2. 23. *Who when he was reuiled reuiled not againe; but committed himſelfe*

ſelfe to him that iudges righteouſly. It is beſt leauing them to the Lords hand. Pray for thy ſmiters, that God would giue them ſmiting hearts, that their hearts may ſmite them for their ſmiting; pray to God if hee ſee it good they may bee ſo ſmitten. This is a reuenge will ſtand with charity. Yet if not, leaue them to God who beſt knowes how to ſmite ſmiters.

Vſe. 3. It is great comfort againſt the ſore afflictions of Gods Church at this preſent. The enemies of the Goſpell haue ſmitten Gods Church with a ſore blow. Well, yet let vs not bee out of heart, the time will aſſuredly come, that God will ſmite theſe ſmiters. The time will vndoubtedly come, when God will ſmite that whited wall, that Romiſh *Ananias*, that ſcarlet whore that animates and ſets a worke thoſe ſmiters. It was low with *Dauid* when he fled from *Abſalom*, and was glad to receiue reliefe from the children of *Ammon*, 2 *Sam.* 17. 27. But cha. 18. *Ioab* ſmites *Abſalom* with three darts, and

Dauid

Dauid retures in peace, and *Pſal.* 3. 7. bleſſes God for *ſmiting his enemies vpon the cheek bone.* How did the Egyptians oppreſſe and ſmite the poore Iſraelites *Exod.* 2. 11. and *Ex.* 5. 14? But at laſt *Exod.* 12. God ſmites the land of Egypt, and the firſt borne, & *Ex.* 15. 6. *daſhes in pieces* theſe ſmiters. See how hard it went with *Iſrael*, 1 *Sam.* 4. 10. 11. *And the Philiſtims fought, and Iſrael was ſmitten, and there was a very great ſlaughter; for there fell of Iſrael thirty thouſand footmen, and the Arke of God was taken.* Behold what a terrible blow here was giuen: The Prieſts ſlaine, and the Arke captiued, as if God himſelfe had beene taken priſoner, and yet at laſt, 1 *Sam.* 5. 6. God ſmites theſe ſmiters, *But the hand of God was heauy vpon them, and ſmote them with Emerods*, yea as *Dauid* ſings, *Pſalm.* 78. 66. *He* ſmote *his enemies in the hinder parts, he put them to a perpetuall reproach*, Hee ſmites them reproachfully. Sometimes he ſmites enemies on the cheeke bone, *Pſal.* 3. 7. Sometimes he ſmites them

them in the hinder parts, both are diſgracefull and reproachfull, but the later the worſe, a diſgraceful thing to be ſcourged and whipt like boyes. Antichriſtian ſmiters do preuaile, and happely may yet much more, and may giue yet ſorer blowes, but yet as in *Nebucadnezzars* dreame, *Dan.* 2. 34. 35. the ſtone cut out without hands *ſmote* the Image vpon the feet, and brake them in pieces, ſo that the iron, braſſe, clay, gold, all became *like the chaffe of the ſummer threſhing floores*; So will Chriſt in his good time ſmite theſe ſmiters, ſo that their place ſhall be no more found.

Doctr. *God ſhall ſmite thee.* Obſerue *the marvellous equity of Gods adminiſtration in the executions of his iuſtice.* God fits his puniſhments to mens ſinnes. Here we ſee the truth of that, *Matth.* 7. 2. *With what meaſure ye mete, it ſhall bee meaſured to you againe.* If *Ananias* ſmite *Paul*, God will ſmite *Ananias*. *Smiting* was his ſin, *ſmiting* ſhall be his puniſhment. *Paul* ſayes not, God ſhall iudge thee

thee, or plague thee, but God *ſhal ſmite thee*, to teach that God doth not only iuſtice vpon ſinners, but that there is a *retaliation* in Gods iuſtice, a recompenſing with the like. That looke as amongſt the Iudicials of the Iews there was a law of retaliation, *Eye for Eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand*; That if a man wronged another with the loſſe of an eye, he was not onely to be puniſhed, but to be puniſhed in the ſelfe-ſame kinde, to loſe an eye himſelfe; ſo the Lord for the moſt part follows the ſame courſe in diſpenſation of Iuſtice. If men *ſmite*, God will not onely puniſh, but *ſmite*.

That looke as it is in the caſe of obedience, ſo is it in the caſe of ſin. When men yeeld obedience to God, hee not onely rewards their obedience with a recompence, but with a recompence of *Retaliation*, Prou. 3.9 Honouring God with the increaſe of the fruits, is honoured from GOD with the recompence of the increaſe of their fruits. *Abraham* ſpares not his ſeed, therefore God

God wil multiply his ſeed, *Gen.* 22.16. 17. It was in *Dauids* heart to build God an houſe, therefore GOD will build him an houſe, 2 *Sam.* 7.2.5.11.

Thus it is alſo in the caſe of ſinne; this is the rule the Lord proceeds by often in his Iuſtice, to meet with wicked men in their kind. As *with the mercifull he ſhews himſelfe mercifull*, ſo with the *froward hee will ſhew himſelfe froward*, Pſal. 18.25,26. And if men will *walke contrary* vnto him, he will *walke contrary* vnto them, *Leuit.* 26. And he will croſſe them that croſſe him. And thoſe that will not hear when he cals, he will not heare when they call, *Pro.* 1 24,28. For the better cleering of this point, we may ſee the truth of it in diuers particulars.

1. Gods puniſhments are in the *ſame manner*. The ſame manner of ſinne, the ſame manner of puniſhment. *Ananias* ſmites *Paul* in a barbarous and a malicious manner, he himſelfe was cruelly ſmitten, and ſlaine. The ſinne of the *Sodomites* was a ſinne againſt nature, their

their puniſhment was after the ſame manner, fire deſcended from heauen. It is vnnaturall for fire to come downwards. They ſinne vnnaturally, fire comes downe vnnaturally. The *Philiſtims* not onely ſmite *Iſrael*, but they doe it with a *ſpightfull heart*, & meerely for *Vengeance Ez.*25.15. Therefore *ver.*17.*I will execute great vengeance vpon them with furious rebukes*. Vengeance for vengeance, māner for manner. Such was the late remarkable Iuſtice of God vpon that popiſh Conuenticle in the Citie, many of that crue were fallen from God and fallen from the truth; the Lord ſlaughters them by a fall. A fall was their ſinne, a fall was their death, there was a fall for fall.

2. Gods puniſhments are in the *ſame kinde*. Looke in what kinde the ſinne is, of the ſame kinde is the puniſhment. *Sodomes* ſinne was in fiery luſts, they were in their ſinne ſet on fire from hel. Their puniſhment was of the ſame kinde. God raines downe fire from heauen vpon them. A fiery ſinne, and a fiery

fiery puniſhment. Memorable in this kinde was the iuſtice of God vpon that notorious and fiery perſecutor *Stephen Gardiner*, who would not ſit down to dinner til the newes came from *Oxford* of the fire ſet to *Ridley* and *Latimer*; but before his meale was ended, God kindled a fire in his body, which ere long diſpatcht him, and made him thruſt his tongue blacke out of his mouth. Such was Gods Iuſtice vpon *Adonibezek*, *Iudg.* 1.7. in the cutting off his thumbes, and his great toes. *Threeſcore and ten Kings hauing their thumbes and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat vnder my Table.* As *I haue done*, ſo *God hath requited me.* God hath met with me in mine owne kinde, he hath paid me with mine owne coine. Thus was Gods iuſtice diuers wayes vpon the *Egyptians.* They threw the *Iſraelits* children into the waters, and ſtayned the waters with *blood*, therefore God turnes their waters into *blood.* To which that place alludes, *Apo.* 16.4.5.6. *And the third Angell powred out his viall*

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viall vpon the waters, and fountaines of waters, and they became blood. And I heard the Angell of the waters ſay, Righteous art thou O Lord, &c. becauſe thou haſt iudged thus, *for they haue ſhed the blood of Saints and Prophets; and thou haſt giuen them blood to drinke.* Where not onely the Iuſtice of God, but alſo the equitie thereof is magnified, not onely becauſe God had *iudged*, but becauſe he had iudged *thus*. Againe, the *Egyptians* deſtroy the males of the childrē, God meets with them in their kind, he ſmites the firſt-born throughout all *Egypt*. The *Egyptians* drowne the *Iſraelites* Infats in the waters, God payes them in their kind, he drownes the *Egyptians* in the waters of the red ſea, there is *drowning* for *drawning*, and *waters* for *waters*. *Nadab* and *Abihu*, ſinne by fire, and *Leuit.* 10. 2. *There went out a fire from the Lord, and deuoured them.*

How many fires hath the Whore of *Babylon* kindled, wherein ſhe hath conſumed to aſhes the Saints of God, God

will plague her with an end ſuting with her ſin, *Apoc.* 17.16. ſhe her ſelfe ſhall be burnt with fire; *They ſhall eate her fleſh, and burne her with fire.* There is *fire* for *fire*, *Apoc.* 9.12. ſhe there darkens the light of the truth, with the ſmoake of hereſie and ſuperſtition; *There aroſe a ſmoake out of the pit, as the ſmoake of a great furnace, and the Sun and the ayre were darkened by reaſon of the ſmoake of the pit*: And *Apoc.* 18.9.18. there wee finde the *ſmoake of her burning*. There is *ſmoake* for *ſmoak*. God will make her *ſmoake* in the end that hath brought ſuch a deale of ſpirituall *ſmoake* into his Church. And as that Eperour ſaid, *Let him periſh with ſmouke that ſold ſmoak*; ſo hath ſhe periſh with *ſmoak* at the laſt, that hath put out the eyes of ſo many thouſands with the *ſmoake* of hereſie and ſuperſtition. This was that iuſtice of God which the Papiſts Powder-Martyrs, *Catesby*, and ſome others of them were forced to acknowledge, when they who had thought to haue blowne vp the State with *Powder*, were

Fumo pereat, qui fumum vendidit.

were themſelues ſpoyled with *Powder*, a ſparke of fire flying into it, as they were drying it, and preparing for their defence.

Such is that Iuſtice of God threatned *Hab.2.15.16. Woe vnto him that giueth his neighbour drinke, that putteſt thy bottle to him, and makeſt him drunken alſo, that thou mayeſt looke on their nakedneſſe, Thou art filled with ſhame for glory, drink thou alſo, and led thy fore-skinne be vncouered, the cuppe of the Lords right hand ſhall be turned vnto thee, & ſhamefull ſpuing ſhall be on thy glory.* A good place for drunkards to thinke vpon, eſpecially ſuch whoſe glory is their ſhame, whoſe glory is to make others drunke. They ſhall haue *cuppe* for *cuppe*, *nakedneſſe* for *nakedneſſe*, *ſpuing* for *ſpuing*. As they haue made others ſpue and vomit, through oppreſſion by drinke, ſo will God giue them ſuch a draught of the bitter dregs of the cuppe of his wrath, that ſhall make them ſpue their very hearts out, as *Ier.25.27. Drinke and be drunken, and ſpue and fall, and riſe*

no more, becauſe of the ſword which I will ſend amongſt you. Of this kinde was that Iuſtice of God vpon *Dauid* himſelfe. Hee killes *Vriah* with the *ſword*, therefore the *ſword* ſhall not depart from his houſe; He defiles the wife of *Vriah*, therefore his Concubines are defiled by *Abſalom*. This is that Iuſtice, *Apoc.* 13. 10. *He that leadeth into Captiuity, ſhall goe into Captiuity; he that killeth with the ſword, muſt be killed with the ſword.* It was the moſt righteous hand of God vpon *Saul*, that hee that put Gods Prieſts to the ſword ſhould fall vpon his owne ſword; & iuſt with God that *Elymas* the Sorcerer, that would haue kept the Deputy in ſpirituall, ſhould himſelfe be ſmitten with bodily blindneſſe.

3. Gods puniſhments are oft in the *ſame part*, and member of the body, wherewith men haue offended. That look as renowned *Cranmer* dealt with himſelfe at his Martyrdome; That hand wherewith hee had ſubſcribed to the ſixe Articles, that hand hee firſt

firſt put in the fire, in an holy reuenge vpon himſelfe; euen ſo deals the Lord very often in his Iuſtice; That which men haue made the inſtrument of their ſinne, God makes the ſubiect of his Iudgements. *Abſaloms* pride, and his weakeneſſe lay where *Samſons* ſtrength was. *Abſaloms* haire was *Abſaloms* pride, therefore *Abſaloms* hayre, as it is conceiued, was *Abſaloms* halter, and whileſt hee will needes ſpare the Barber a labour, he alſo ſpares the Hangman a labour. Such was Gods Iuſtice vpon *Samſon* himſelfe. He can finde none to be the *pleaſure of his eies*, as the Prophet ſpeaks of his wife, *Ezek.* 24. but *Philiſtimes*, Iudg. 14. 1. 2. 3. and Chapter. 16. 1. and ſo in the loue of a *Philiſtim*, *Dalilah*, he abuſes his eyes. What is the iſſue? At laſt the *Philiſtims* put out his eies. God puniſht the abuſe of his eyes with the loſſe of his eyes, and thoſe eyes that loued *Philiſtims*, were pluckt out by *Philiſtims*.

Memorable in this kinde was Gods

iuſtice vpon that French King *Henry* the ſecõd, who in a rage againſt a Proteſtant Counſellor, committed him into the hands of one of his Nobles to bee impriſoned, and that with theſe words, That *hee would ſee him burned with his owne eyes*. But marke the iuſtice of God, within a few dayes after, the ſame Noble man with a Launce put into his hands by the King, did at a tilting run the ſaid King into one of his eyes whereof he dyed.

Of this kinde was the Iuſtice of God vpon *Zachary*, *Luke* 1. Offending with his tongue in that queſtion, *How can this be?* he is puniſhed with the loſſe of the vſe of his tongue, and ſpeech for a time. The rich gluttons tongue had denyed *Lazarus* a crum, therefore it is denyed a drop of water. The ſame glutton had abuſed his *tongue* in gluttony, and therefore his *tongue* hath a peculiar torment in hel. So thoſe *Zach.* 14. 12 had their *tongues conſumed in their mouths*, like enough as with their hands ſo with their tongues they had fought againſt

againſt *Ieruſalem*.

Such was Gods Iuſtice vpon *Ieroboam*, hee ſtretches forth his arme againſt the Prophet, and the Lord withers it. He with his arme threatens to ſmite, & God ſmites him in his arme. Like that iuſtice which was done vpon the Emperour *Aurelianus*, who when hee was ready to ſubſcribe, and ſet his hand to an Edict for the perſecution of the Chriſtians, was ſuddenly cramped in his knuckles, and ſo hindred from it by the iudgement of GOD. *Euſeb. lib. 7 caſ. 29.*

I may not here omit that notable inſtance of GODS Iuſtice vpon *Rodolph*, Duke of *Sucuia*, hee whom the Pope ſtirred vp againſt his lawfull Lord and Soueraign, againſt his Oath to vſurpe his Crowne and Empire. This *Rodolph* in his Warres for the Empire, was wounded in the right hand, of which wound he dyed, and at his death acknowledged Gods Iuſtice in theſe words; *You ſee*, ſaith hee to his friends, *here my right hand*

wounded, with this right hand I ſware to my Lord Henry *the Empcrour. But the command of the Pope hath brought me to this, that laying aſide the reſpect of mine Oath, I ſhould vſurpe an honour not due to me. But what is now come of it? In that hand which hath violated mine Oath, I am wounded to death.* And ſo with anguiſh of heart he ended his daies. An example ſo much the rather to be marked, that men may ſee how God bleſſes the Popes bleſſings, and his diſpenſations with Oathes, eſpecially, when they are giuen to arme men to rebellion againſt their lawfull Soueraignes.

4. The equitie of Gods iuſtice appeares in that, *Prou. 26.27. Who ſo diggeth a pit ſhall fall therein, and he that rolles a ſtone, it will returne vpon him.* Such was Gods iuſtice vpon *Haman*, he makes a gallowes for his owne necke. Hitherto wee may referre the iuſtice God, when God turnes mens beloued ſins into their puniſhments. Whoredome was the Leuites Concubines ſin, *Iudg.* 19.2. and Whoredome was her

Vidctis manum dexteram meam de vulnere ſauciam. Hac ego iuraui Domino meo Henrico vt non nocerē ei, nec inſidiarer gloriæ eius. Sed iuſſio Apoſtolica, Pontificumque petitio me ad id adduxit, vt iuramenti tranſgreſſor honorem mihi indebitum vſurparē. Quis igitur finis nos exceperit, videtis quia in manu vnde iuramenta violaui mortale hoc vulnus accepi, &c. Matth. Myſt Iuiq. p. 259.

her death, *verſ.* 26. The Lord. *Deu.* 28. 27. threatens the *botch of Egypt*, & how frequently is the ſinne of vncleanneſſe ſmitten with the *French botch*, the fruit of the ſinne? How frequent are the examples of Gods Iuſtice vpon drunkards: drunkenneſſe their ſinne, and drunkennes their death. And ſo that Prouerbe is often verified, *Prou.* 5. 22. *His owne iniquities ſhall take the wicked himſelfe, and he ſhall be holden with the cords of his ſinnes.*

5. The equitie of Gods Iuſtice appeares it this, when he makes *the place* of ſinne, *the place* of puniſhment. Wee haue frequent examples of this in Scripture. This was threatned *Ahab*, 1 *King.* 21. 19. *In the place* where dogs licked the blood of *Naboth*, ſhall dogs licke thy blood. And this was made good, 2 *King.* 9. 26. In *Tophet the place* where they had ſlaine their Sonnes, and Daughters, would God ſlay the *Iewes*, *Ier.* 7. 31, 32. And as their *houſes* were the places of their *ſins*, ſo ſhould their *houſes* be the *places* of their puniſhment.

niſhment, *Ier.* 19.13. And becauſe the Sabbath was profaned *in the gates* of *Ieruſalem*, therefore in the gates thereof would God kindle a fire, *Ier.* 17.27. And remarkeable is that, *Ezek.* 6.13. *Their ſlaine men ſhall bee amongſt their Idols round about their altars, and vnder euery thicke Oake*, the place *where they did offer ſweet ſauour to all their Idols*. Such was the iuſtice of GOD in that late blow vpon the Popiſh company. In the very place where they vſed to diſhonour GOD, the hand of GOD was vpon them, they were ſlaine, and their carcaſſes cruſhed in the place of their Maſſe-worſhip, the firſt floore falling into their Maſſing place, and ſo they and their Crucifixes and Images, all daſhed together, God doing with them as with the *Egyptians*, *Num.* 33.4. not onely ſmiting them, but alſo *executing iudgement vpon their gods*: yea, not onely ſo, but executed them and their gods, in the *ſelf-ſame place*, where GOD had been by them ſo much diſhonoured.

6. The

6. The equity of Gods iuſtice is to be ſeen in *the time* of his puniſhments. God oft makes *that time* wherein men haue ſinned *the time* of his iudgements. At the time of the Paſſe-ouer did the Iewes crucifie Chriſt, and at the time of the Paſſe-ouer was Ieruſalem taken. Heauy is the calamity that is befallen the Churches beyond the Seas, the time wherein the firſt blow was giuen, is not to be forgotten. The firſt blow was vpon the Sabbath, vpon that day was *Prague* loſt. What one thing haue all thoſe Churches fayled in more, then in that point of the religious obſeruation of that day? That day they neglected to ſanctifie by obedience, vpon that day God would be ſanctified in his iuſtice vpon them, and *in the time* would haue them reade one cauſe of their puniſhment. Neither is the time wherein God did that late iuſtice vpon thoſe Popiſh perſons to be forgotten. It is ſomewhat, that after their Roman accoũt, it was vpon their *fift of Nouember*, God would let thoſe of that Ieſuited

Ieſuited brood ſee how good is was to blow vp Parliament houſes, and happily would haue them learne more loyalty and religion, then to ſcoffe at our new holyday.

Of this kind was Gods iuſtice vpon one *Leauer*, who rayling on that worthy Martyr and ſeruant of Chriſt, Mr. *Latimer*, ſaying, *that hee ſaw that euill fauoured knaue* Latimer, *when hee was burned*, & *that he had teeth like an horſe*, his ſonne the ſame houre, and at the ſame time as neere as could bee gathered, wickedly hanged himſelfe. And the ſame was Gods iuſtice ſeazing vpon *Steuen Gardiner*, the ſame day that *Ridley* and *Latimer* were burned.

Since then there is ſuch an equitie in Gods adminiſtration of iuſtice, let it be our care and wiſedome to obſerue the ſame. Learne to comment vpon Gods workes of Iuſtice, & to compare mens wayes, & Gods workes together. God is to haue the praiſe and glory of his Iuſtice vpon others, as well as of his mercy to our ſelues, now we ſhall then be

be beſt able to giue God this glory, when we ſo obſerue his adminiſtratiō, that we may be able not onely to ſay, The Lord is iuſt, but the Lord is iuſt in this, and that particular, when we can ſay, as *Reuel.* 16.5. not onely *Righteous art thou O Lord that iudgeſt*, but righteous art thou O Lord that *iudgeſt thus. Thus* they ſinned, and *thus* are they puniſhed. It is good to obſerue all the circumſtances of *Gods* Iuſtice, that ſo not onely the iuſtice but the wiſdome and equity of Gods iuſtice may be ſeene; and this is to trace the Lord by the foote, *Pſa* 68.24. Eſpecially we ſhould be thus wiſe in perſonall euills that befall our ſelues, that by our puniſhment, and the circumſtances thereof, we might be led to the conſideration of our ſinnes, and ſo might ſay as *Adonibezek*; *As I haue done, ſo hath God rewarded me.*

Learne to giue *God* the prayſe of his equitie as of his iuſtice. So doth *Dauid*, Pſ. 7.15. 16.17. *I will praiſe the Lord* according *to his righteouſneſſe.* 2

Tremble

Tremble and ſinne not. Take heede how and wherein we ſinne, leſt by our ſinnes we teach *God* how to puniſh vs. Take heede of abuſing thy tongue in ſwearing, rayling, ſcoffing, leſt *God* lay ſome terrible iudgement vpon thy tongue here, or ſome peculiar torment vpon thy tongue in hel hereafter. Take heed what meaſure thou meaſureſt to others, leſt thou teach *God* to meaſure the ſame to thy ſelfe. Take heede that thou make not thine houſe a denne of ſpuing drunkards, leſt *God* make thine houſe to ſpue thee forth; Take heede how thou vſe thy wits, thy ſtrength; take heede of ſinning in thy Children, or any thing elſe thou haſt, leſt *God* make the matter of thy ſinne, the matter of thy puniſhment.

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